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A Miracle on 19th Street:

Tracing the Roots of Resistance in the Blackland Community

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A Miracle on 19th Street:

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by

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Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Science in Community and Regional Planning

The University of Texas at Austin

May 2019

Dedication

To my wife and partner Erika Brown Edwards, and to the Blackland community, as it was, as it is, and as it will be.

Acknowledgements

I would like to than Dr. Bjorn Sletto and Dr. Michael Oden for their excellent advising and continuous support. I would also like to thank Dr. Miriam Solis, who helped me to stay honest, open, and diligent.

Abstract

A Miracle on 19th Street:

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2019

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In the 1980s, the University of Texas annexed swathes of the Blackland community in East Austin for its Campus Expansion Plan. The Blackland community rallied together to resist annexation, and through the creation of the Blackland Neighborhood Association (BNA) and the Blackland Community Development Corporation (BCDC) was able to sustain their resistance to displacement over time through community-driven development. While community resistance in Blackland was an exceptional case of success, other communities were unable to effectively resist displacement, and many continue to be at risk of displacement from development pressures today. This thesis looks to understand how the Blackland community was able to create conditions for sustainable resistance to University annexations, what forms of community capacity were employed to do so, and what insight their experiences might offer to contemporary community resistance efforts. To explore these questions this paper employs an analytical framework informed by community capacity and critical development theory. While political resistance through the BNA was effective in

challenging UT's institutional power and create spaces for participation, it was through the BCDC that the community was able to assert community control over development in the neighborhood. The dynamic nature of resistance over time in the Blackland community fits within a broader process of mutual learning between east-side communities that should continue to inspire communities in the future.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Blackland Resistance Saga

INTRODUCING THE BLACKLAND MIRACLE

When the University of Texas came to the Blackland neighborhood in 1966 there was no fight to be had. Driven by growth in research funding that drove Universities to acquire new land to accommodate additional facilities, the University looked to the historically segregated east side to make room for the expansion required by the University to accommodate future growth. Having been given the ability to exercise eminent domain by the state legislature the year prior, the University had already experimented with this new power by taking small portions of land surrounding the existing campus, 'testing the waters' so to speak. These initial trials made clear what the University and City officials had almost certainly already known. As had been the historic pattern, areas to the north, west, and south of the University were historically white, and therefore their communities would have mounted fierce resistance to being displaced in the name of development. Instead the University looked to the historically segregated east side, and in doing took advantage of a historic trend wherein communities of color were displaced and devalued in the name of economic development to the benefit of white residents and the white business community.

In 1966 the University annexed approximately 100 acres of land in Blackland, erasing several blocks of the community that would never be recovered and displacing hundreds of residents. The University would have continued, having originally planned to annex 140 acres, but at the time they were unable to acquire enough dilapidated property to secure additional federal funding. The neighborhood did what they could to organize, but the quickness with which UT struck left the community stunned and the University

beyond reproach. With neither time nor means to resist, this initial conflict was over before it started:

> "We were given a check for our homes and a bus ticket out of town,' said Dixie Conner, who managed to buy another home just east of the expansion on Leona Street Conner said, 'They showed up on my porch and told me I had 30 days to move. They offered me a price for my place. That was it I took it and bought a place just east of where they said they were stopping.' 13 'We really didn't have time to organize,' said June Brewer. They already had all the angles figured. We were beaten from the outset" (McCarver, 1995, p.25).

Over the next 2 decades the University bid their time by collaborating with the city's white business and development communities to acquire property in Blackland. They continued to rent at low rates but neglected property maintenance entirely, allowing the structures to become dilapidated over time. In doing so the University and their agents were able to degrade Blackland properties in order to justify their condemnation in the future. Many of the real estate and development actors who assisted the University had been directly implicit in constructing the racial hierarchy of segregation that relegated communities of color to a position of temporary occupancy on land destined to serve the white majority's needs. Aligned with the city's business community, the University stood tall as it prepared to return to the east side in the early 1980s.

What nobody expected was for Blackland to fight back. Not the University, not the City, and to some extent not even the Blackland community or its leaders had any idea what great heights the community would rise to in successfully challenging the University for control over their neighborhood's development. Between 1981-1982, just one year's time, the Blackland community had organized the Blackland Neighborhood Association (BNA), put sufficient political pressure on the University to force a position of compromise, established the Blackland Community Development Corporation (BCDC), and acquired $500,000 of CBGD funding to pursue a community development

agenda of their own making. Their fight would continue for the next 7 years, during which time the BNA and BCDC engaged in political resistance and community development (respectively) with relentless diligence.

By the end of 1989 the conflict had reached the office of State Governor Ann Richards, the highest State authority to which the University of Texas Board of Regents is held accountable. Governor Richard's intervention on the behalf of Blackland instructing the University president to take Blackland's proposals seriously was the neighborhood's symbolic slung stone to the head of the University's institutional Goliath. Hostilities would continue into the early 1990s before the Blackland community would be allowed to rest. By the end of the conflict, however, the Blackland community and their organizations had not only felled a giant but established a method for community control over the future of their area. As of 2019 the BCDC continues to provide space for building community cohesion, hosting hundreds of events each year (Texas Housers, 2015), while continuing to expand their portfolio of affordable and transitional housing that to date numbers at 48 homes that serve 131 residents.

DEFINING THE EXCEPTIONAL NATURE OF BLACKLAND RESISTANCE

Blackland was not the first east side community to engage in resistance against displacement by development, nor the first to be successful. What sets the Blackland conflict apart from other east-side community resistance efforts is the sheer scale of University's institutional and political power against which the neighborhood resisted. In the words of John Henneberger, a remarkable community ally who played a critical role in both Blackland resistance and the resistance of the east side communities who preceded Blackland:

> Blackland asserted power against an institutional force that, you know that's a David and Goliath sort of thing. You don't get much bigger in this town. ...This was the assertion of a type of neighborhood power that had not been seen before in minority neighborhoods (Interview, 2018).

The Blackland community's political resistance through the BNA and counter-development platform through the BCDC came together and formed a fierce community resistance methodology that both challenged the legitimacy of a state institution's right to develop while creating a vehicle for community driven development. The combination of these two community organizations, under local leadership and primarily supported internally, empowered a community to take on an institutional giant and live a long, self-determined life afterward.

While the institutional scale of Blackland's aggressor does not map neatly to the more diffuse, smaller-scale private development influences that present displacement pressure to the east side today, there remain salient lessons about how communities can resist displacement both in Austin and in other cities with persistent legacies of segregation. The exceptional nature of the Blackland case is strengthened by its relationship with other community resistance efforts on the east side. There are shared experiences of oppression in communities of color in Austin's east side, as in other historically segregated or marginalized communities more broadly, and there are processes of mutual learning and cooperation between these communities that inform their strategies for resistance.

As both a community that was able to draw from the experiences of other communities of color and a community that in its own right created and successfully employed their own resistance strategies, Blackland becomes part of a broader continuity of community resistance on the East Side. As community leader Katherine Poole expressed herself (McCarver, 1995) in synchronicity with those close to the case I

interviewed, embedded into Blackland's community and history of resistance is a hope that their efforts and experience may in the future empower other communities to fight for their neighborhood and the right to self-determine.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

The original motivation for this work was rather simple, in that I wanted to know how Blackland was able to effectively resist UT and establish some form of long term control over their neighborhood. Sources on the Blackland resistance saga were sparse, and the materials that were available did not provide a comprehensive understanding of how the community collectivized, engaged in resistance over time, or ultimately stopped UT's annexation program in Blackland. From what I could gather, what they did was improbable, incredible, and inadequately represented in the city's historical discourse. The first question is therefor centered on the fundamental questions of any story or narrative - the what, who, when, and how:

1. What is the full story of Blackland community resistance against University annexations in the 1980s? What were the critical pieces of the puzzle, and how did they fit together?

From this initial inquiry new layers of questioning were added to seek a more structured understanding of Blackland's community resistance dynamics and how they could inform the resistance efforts of other communities:

2. What forms of community capacity were most instrumental in empowering the community to resist displacement or increasing their likelihood of success?
3. What were the conditions for success? What did Blackland need to accomplish to bring sustainable community control over neighborhood development?
4. what lessons or experiences do their resistance efforts bring to contemporary community resistance discourse?

The second question is intended to home in on a more structured understanding of what the Blackland community was able to draw from within its shared histories, experiences, and knowledge in order to form a collective neighborhood platform for challenging UT and securing a future of self-determination. By looking at community capacities, which for the purposes of this paper refers to the human, social, and organizational capital (i.e. skills, networks, knowledge) communities may possess internally, the interaction between key players, the social networks within which they operated, and the organizations they formed can be better understood. Shifting to how community capacity is employed, the third research question seeks to understand how Blackland was able to influence the power dynamics to resist UT development and create conditions for sustained neighborhood control. Finally, in this spirit of critical race and radical planning theory the last question looks to situate Blackland in a continuity of resistance by marginalized communities (or communities of color) in Austin's east side, amplify their voices, and explore what salient lessons may inform future community resistance efforts.

To explore these questions this paper employs an analytical framework informed by community capacity and critical development theory that articulates the power dynamics within which the community engaged in resistance and the forms of

community capacities they employed to do so. I draw from 2 particular theories in order to analyze the interplay between community resistance and the external power dynamics against which they resist. The first, Gaventa's (2006) power cube concept, provides a framework for articulating how power is exercised in terms of form, level, and space. The second, community capacity (Chaskin, 2000), is employed to help bring understanding to how Blackland was able to harness capacities from within the community to collectivize to the size necessary (both organizationally and in terms of (wo)man power) for mounting an effective resistance effort.

This analytical framework based on power dynamics and community capacity is further guided by critical race theories that focus on the knowledge, capacities, and resistance strategies that originate within communities of color and their shared experiences of oppression. Yosso's (2006) theory of community cultural wealth is employed to target specific forms of community capacity embedded in the shared histories of communities of color in order to specify how those communities engage in resistance. As a basis for my analysis, I provide a thorough review of historical and archival materials to construct a formative understanding of Blackland's resistance dynamics to which the analytical framework may be applied. Interviews with key actors who were involved in Blackland and east side resistance will be used to more precisely identify forms of community capacity that had the most significant influence on fostering successful resistance efforts.

THESIS STRUCTURE

Chapter 2 contains a review of literature that forms the basis for situating the Blackland resistance saga in discourses of radical planning, critical development theory, community capacity, and critical race theory. In Chapter 3 the history of the Blackland

community is drawn from historic and archival records, tracing the community's progression from the City's early founding years to the era of UT annexations. This chapter also includes an overview of the city's history of segregation, institutional discrimination, and the racialized hierarchy of development underlying justifications of UT's actions, as well as how the University's development regime was constructed.

Chapter 4 draws on the records and writings of community leader Bo McCarver as well as other historic and archival sources to present a condensed narrative of Blackland's resistance. While not an exhaustive review, this summary covers seven years of Blackland resistance and details the strategic progression of Blackland's resistance as it contested the continually shifting power dynamics through which city and university actors maintained their development authority, eventually establishing a long term strategy for maintaining their neighborhood's integrity. The analysis presented in Chapter 5 will continue to examine the dynamics of Blackland community resistance through the analytical framework detailed above. The chapter closes on considerations of how Blackland's resistance relates to current community resistance efforts, how the community has maintained their integrity over time, and how the shared experiences of communities of color create a continuum of resistance knowledge that will continue to empower communities in the future.

STATEMENT OF POSITIONALITY

In this thesis, I draw on radical planning theory to position the Blackland community with planning discourse. The radical approach reframes communities from the subject of planning to the position of change agents in their own right, with community-driven or -derived planning processes of their own design. Communities then

may be understood as planners themselves, and the disciplinary umbrella of planning can be opened to a wealth of knowledge, experience, and strategies that emerge in communities of color (or those historically marginalized). Radical planning also reframes the role of the technical planner towards more substantive engagement and support of communities of color by emphasizing processes of mutual learning, deference to community leadership, and amplifying the perspectives or experiences of these communities in planning discourse.

More broadly, both this work and my approach is informed by a deep consideration of critical race theory. In that sense it is requisite to clarify that I am an external white observer of the Blackland community's history of resistance and am further undergoing this in association with the very institution with whom they fought. At the core of this work is a deep respect for the Blackland community and what they have done to preserve the integrity of their neighborhood. This is their story, and I am merely grateful for the opportunity to share their remarkable tale. That said, great care has been taken to draw from sources closest to the community, preserve the integrity of their perspectives, and remain as true to the spirit of the Blackland community as possible. The Blackland resistance saga is a part of both east side and city history overall that deserves its place in the planning canon. By giving their story a new platform, it is my hope that the community is done a service and that their story may empower future communities to resist displacement.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

While the story of Blackland's community resistance could be figuratively related to a David and Goliath allegory, endeavoring to forge a more structural understanding of how they were able to rally together effectively and defend their community from displacement requires a more nuanced approach. In the latter half of the 20th century planning scholars began to seek out new, more equitable means of understanding and engaging with marginalized communities both in the US and internationally. Radical planning theory is introduced first to ground this work within planning discourse. Drawing from its firm roots in dynamics of opposition, radical planning helps to structure interpretations of community resistance and the power dynamics within which communities operate. Radical planning further allows for situating communities as significant actors in planning systems and processes, rather than the subject planning, and brings insight to the question of how the positionality of planning practitioners may be reframed to better engage in equitable community collaboration.

To better understand the nature of community resistance against displacement, theory and discourse related to international development and involuntary migration offer a global context driven by perspectives from the global south that complement the counter-hegemonic practices of radical planning. This approach offers a framework for categorizing forms of external power dynamics that informs this study's analysis. Literature from critical race theory is introduced to shed light on methodological biases that threaten to undervalue or misrepresent the experiences of Communities of Color, while providing valuable conceptual nuance through introducing theories of community cultural wealth. The final section of the review considers theories of community capacity to help explain why some communities are able to mount effective resistance to

displacement. Community capacity, nuanced by critical race theory and community cultural wealth, provides the framework for analyzing community resistance at the individual, organizational, and communal level that will be employed for this study.

RADICAL PLANNING

Throughout the history of planning the discipline has taken part in the systemic and institutional marginalization of both people of color and the working class. Attempting to redress the implicit role of planning in forming and perpetuating patterns of segregation and marginalization, scholars of planning theory have spent several decades attempting to unravel threads of institutional discrimination and their socio-political dynamics from the fabrics of our built environment(s). Rather than undergo a rigorous review of these changes, this study engages radical planning lens through which to interpret the nature of Blackland community resistance. Radical planning is notably rooted in dynamics of conflict or opposition, differing from other community-oriented approaches by directly confronting the power dynamics that perpetuate the marginalization of the marginalized (Beard, 2003). In the words of Beard herself (2003), "[r]adical planning begins with a critique of the present situation and then provides an operational response to that critique" (p.17).

As a planning approach, the radical perspective shares with advocacy planning the idea that planners should work with communities in a supportive capacity in order to assist the community in forging a future that is self-determined. Radical planning critiques and offers strategies of opposition to what Miraftab (2009) refers to as "hegemony" (p.34), or the "normative relations" (p.34) defined by state or governmental institutions (and their supporting economic and political actors) through which they exercise control over processes of politics, participation, and development. Strategies

employed through radical planning seek to challenge the oppressive nature of urban development growth regimes and the hegemony they construct to support them through building social agency (individual knowledge/skills, organizational capacity, and social networking) in disempowered communities and fostering forms of collective activation (Friedman, 1987). By mounting continuous and dynamic resistance against such institutional hegemonies, community resistance movements may "expose and upset the normalized relations of dominance" (Miraftab, 2009, p.34) and reshape the hegemony against which they resist to empower communities.

As planners have often been implicated in the marginalization of communities, and other modes for engaging communities have failed to shed the prescriptive biases that perpetuate unequal power relations between planners and communities, there is a need to understand how planners might more equitably work through meaningful collaboration. The approach to engaging communities from the radical planning perspective is intended to leverage planning skills and knowledge to assist communities without becoming overly prescriptive, as Beard (2003) describes:

> In this model, planners help the community find practical solutions, understand institutional constraints, and provide the 'intelligence' necessary to develop successful strategies (Friedmann, 1987: 304). Appropriate knowledge is not, however, the radical planner's monopoly; rather, it is obtained through an overlapping and intertwined process in which theory, strategy, vision, and action inform each other in social learning (Friedmann, 1987: 302). Friedmann warns that the radical planner must guard against the tendency for power and information to be consolidated in a small decision-making elite, by ensuring the broad participation of community members (p.17).

This notion of mutual learning is vital to differentiating the approach from more normative modes of community engagement that fail to overcome internal biases towards institutional knowledge. In the past planners have often taken a more technical approach, defining the problem and solution for a given community as they saw fit based on their

expertise. The radical planner instead is positioned in a supportive capacity, allowing the community to define their aspirations and the challenges they face, utilizing what the discipline has to offer while fostering a community driven process.

Radical planning has roots both in the global south and in developed countries, and there are many shared experiences through which communities engage in resistance at a global scale (e.g. Miraftab, 2009; Meth, 2010; Shrestha, 2015). This offers an opportunity to integrate planning theory within a broader discourse of international development that could provide valuable insight into community resistance dynamics, particularly in resisting displacement caused by state-sponsored development. Firanak Miraftab (2009) has sought to apply notions of radical planning to community resistance efforts in the global south as insurgent planning (p.33). In the opening to her well-referenced article *Insurgent Planning: Situating Radical Planning in the Global South*, Miraftab (2009) offers a pathway for a synthesis of planning and international development theory:

> "Emerging struggles for citizenship in the global South, seasoned by the complexities of state–citizen relations within colonial and post-colonial regimes, offer an historicized view indispensable to counter-hegemonic planning practices. As post-welfare societies shrink the sphere of public responsibility, strengthening inequality and alienating the marginalized populations in the metropole, the insights to be gained from the standpoint of the global South have increasing relevance for radical planning in the era of global neoliberalism" (p.33)

Literature on community resistance intertwines with conversations about migration, displacement, and critical development theory centered on the global south, providing two unique elements to consider for this study. First, these works provide valuable insight into dynamics of power and displacement through the incorporation of critical development theories that look at state or institutional power dynamics, international development programs, and global patterns of development-driven

displacement (Mayo, 2018; Oliver-Smith, 2001). In his report for Oxford's Refugee Studies Center, titled *Displacement, Resistance and the Critique of Development: From the Grass Roots to the Global*, Oliver-Smith (2001) provides a detailed exploration of community resistance to "development induced displacement and resettlement" (DIDR) (p.4) in both local and transnational contexts, noting that this experience is intrinsically global:

> One of the voices increasingly heard today is that of people displaced and resettled by development projects. Uprooting and displacement have been among the central experiences of modernity. In many ways, the experience of development has meant for millions of people around the world a separation of local life from a sense of place (p.4)

In the context of DIDR, development can be understood broadly as "the process through which the productive forces of economies and supporting infrastructures are improved through public and private investment" (Oliver-Smith, 2001, p.5). At the heart of DIDR discourse is a conflict between the reasonable exercise of the rights of government institutions and the rights of those that often bear a disproportionate burden of state-driven development. In the same way that planning legitimacy is rooted in the public good, so too are state economic development policies assumed to benefit the good of all within the care of the state. When there is a need for significant land to support infrastructural development, as in the case of state university facilities in Austin, states in varying national contexts exercise the right of eminent domain to acquire what they need to pursue a presumably benevolent economic growth path. Yet these assumptions of public good service do not always hold:

> "While the rhetoric that accompanies large-scale development projects frequently makes references to benefits for a general public, those who must suffer the costs that these projects entail tend to be quite specific communities… It is fundamentally the failure of the state and increasingly the private sector to undertake these projects in an ethical and competent fashion that produces

> conditions generating major forms of resistance. Furthermore, recently, the question of eminent domain has been receiving considerable scrutiny, as has the concept of "national purpose." National laws frequently determine compensation levels for land taken by eminent domain in ways both inadequate and inappropriate."

It is in this sense that community resistance to displacement as a result of state driven development, done under the auspices of eminent domain, becomes deeply resonant with global experiences of the displaced. Resistance in Blackland was a "[challenge to] the state and its hegemony," and as with many other experiences of DIDR globally involved "a clash of contesting interest involving the use of power by one party to relocate another" (Oliver-Smith, 2001, p.15).

The second benefit offered by literature on global resistance to DIDR is the chance to integrate experience and learning from the Global South into planning and urban development discourses that share modernist roots with the international development programs that drove DIDR. Whereas market driven understandings of eminent domain land acquisitions assume that taking compensation equates to voluntary displacement, the work of Oliver-Smith (2001) and more recent work by Mayo (2017) suggest that the circumstances within which the displaced accept compensation often involve poor or misinformation and no alternative choice. In reviewing a recent set of case studies on community resistance (Newell and Wheeler, 2006), Mayo (2017) takes solemn note that in some cases compensation is far from just, or at times non existent for those most vulnerable:

> The cases raised questions about who was entitled to compensation, for example, and who was not. All too often the most disadvantaged groups lacked formal evidence of their rights to the lands in question, and so were unable to claim compensation (p.64).

In the case of Blackland, many residents were renters who were unable to either prevent or seek compensation for being displaced when their building owner decided to

sell. Differences between renters and owners may have different dynamics than residents of informal settlements, but differences are inherent between communities both across internal contexts and within or internal to the communities themselves (Mayo, 2017, p.71). There is great variation in community resistance to displacement, and as the causes and scales of development programs vary, so to do the forms taken by resistance efforts. Despite the variations, the threat of displacement often acts as both a social and political unifier. The threat of displacement may provide the unifying element in a resistance effort and may itself embody or encapsulate multiple community issues (Oliver-Smith, 2001). In a similar manner, displacement is a threat with wide reaching ramifications such that conflicts or divisions within the community may be reconciled to allow for more meaningful collaboration (Mayo, 2017).

In the US during the second half of the 20th century one of the primary drivers of DIDR conflict and resistance was urban renewal, which carved out swatches of communities of color for redevelopment in the modernist design. While the focus is often on the Federal, State, and City policy makers and governmental institutions that enabled processes of urban renewal, more recent studies have highlighted the role major universities in fast growing urban areas as primary actors in both policy making and land development. Winling's (2011) work on the role of the University of Chicago (U of C) reveals the deep ties between major urban universities and the Federal policies that enables urban renewal projects throughout the Cold War era.

According to Winling, "[b]y the late 1950s, the cultural import and political power of universities was at an all-time high and the institutions had become integral parts of the postwar liberal consensus." Looking to capitalize on the heightened importance of Universities in national economic growth and security policy, University of Chicago officials leveraged the connections of their trustees, a coalition of local and

regional business elites, to secure federal funding for the University's redevelopment and campus expansion plans that the University employed as leverage to foster cooperation with the City. When the University of Chicago and city officials felt they had utilized the full extent of their existing urban renewal authority, U of C leaders "set about creating a coalition of institutions to lobby federal lawmakers for tailoring renewal legislation to urban universities" (Winling, 2011, p.69).

As a result U of C's federal lobbying efforts the 1959 Housing Act included specific provisions related to University urban renewal projects that greatly expanded their authority and access to federal funding, including the two-to-one match program that would subsidize the land acquisition costs of the University of Texas a few years later (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3). The University of Chicago was also instrumental in the design and "dissemination of shared real estate practices" (p.72) that would shape the nature of collaboration between private and university development actors and expand university authority into the private realm. University's following the path laid by the University of Chicago's urban renewal policies and practices made for formidable institutional agents of DIDR, as Winling (2011) explains: "[t]hese redevelopment efforts illustrate the new-found and increasing power of the institution, owing in part to the cultural, political, and economic ascension of higher education, which provided administrators political leverage at both the local and the national levels" (p.78).

While universities at this time enjoyed this newfound importance on the national stage and the federal support it entailed, their actual development efforts were inextricable from their local context. The neighborhoods and communities they condemned as 'blighted' or designated 'slums' and destined for 'renewal' were usually communities of color who had been subject to historical processes of segregation,

institutional discrimination, and severe disinvestment. As Carriere (2011) describes, “the battle to contain blight often seemed to become a battle to contain the population of nonwhite community members” (p.11). As will be discussed in Chapter 3, University development actors working under the auspices of modernism and urban renewal would further devalue the historically marginalized and neglected communities of color, often collaborating with private real-estate actors in the model the University of Chicago, and subsequently used the conditions of municipal neglect to justify their programs to "'liberate' countless urban dwellers from the dangers of the unplanned city" (Carriere, 2011, p.4).

Columbia University, for example, sought to curb growing tensions between University expansion and the threat of blight in surrounding communities, which officials feared would spread like a contagion to their campus if not contained (p.12). The University leveraged its urban renewal authority to aggressively acquire multifamily affordable housing in these communities (p.13), often employing proxy real estate companies to shield the University’s presence. As apartments became vacant they would be allowed to remain so and the buildings received no maintenance, allowing them to become dilapidated over time and providing the physical justification for future block clearance. Yet while these major universities may have been vying for national or even global significance through their urban redevelopment efforts, the effects of communal eradication and widespread involuntary displacement inspired fierce resistance from both communities and university student activists.

The institutionally driven displacement that resulted from university urban renewal projects fostered collaboration between communities, students, and community organizations to engage in forms of resistance that evolved dynamically in response to University aggressions. Colloquially referred to as “’Gym Crow’” (Carriere, 2011, p.23),

Columbia's Morningside Heights gymnasium project in the late 1960s became "a symbol of the university's postwar urban renewal strategies" (p.20). Student protesters and community activists subverted Columbia's "belief in its privileged position within postwar liberalism" (p.20) and connected the University's urban renewal efforts with the global discourses of anti-imperialism and post-colonialism. Through collective protest these student protesters and the activists who rallied with them were able to cast Columbia not as the modernist savior but as the imperialist colonizer of communities of color who were denied their right to participate democratically in the governance of their community. Despite a decade of successful urban renewal projects, Columbia's gym project would never be completed but instead would be the rallying point for a momentous collaboration of student activists and communities to contest institutionally driven displacement.

The extent to which resisting displacement fosters community collaboration relates to the dynamic nature of resistance, which changes over time and is continually reshaped by changes in the people that compose the community and its organizations (Oliver-Smith, 2001, p.21). Community resistance efforts, particularly those that are most successful, are able to adapt to changing dynamics both internally and externally and are able to provide consistent support to local interests (Oliver-Smith, 2001). As communities successfully engage in acts of resistance over time these experiences may become embodied within the community and its organizations, creating "a culture of solidarity far more intense than what had existed prior to the project" (Oliver-Smith, 2001, p.39) while allowing for more effective challenge of future threats.

In parallel to Miraftab's (2009) call for the application of theory originating from the global north to community resistance in the global south, scholars of international development suggest that studies in the global north consider experiences and knowledge

deriving from the global south. In doing so one is able to align the community resistance work of US communities within a global framework of communal resistance to development driven displacement. This allows for a vital shift from western-centric technical planning discourse to the discourses originating from scholars and communities of the global south. These discourses are rooted in experiences of oppression, marginalization, and state or institutionally dominated power structures against which communities that have been disempowered engage in resistance to reclaim their right to their homes and communities. These experiences may manifest in a myriad of different forms, but many aspects are shared across communities globally. In recognizing these resonances between US and global urban experiences, one has the opportunity to pursue more innovative, equity driven modes of practice informed by voices of the marginalized:

> There are numerous ways of rethinking the metropolis as it is usually thought of in the global north by taking on board the realities of, as well as innovating theoretically around, aspects of large cities in the south. What is important for a truly global conversation is to find out how, in different places on the earth, people attempt to get a grip on the metropolitan world and make themselves at home in it in the full knowledge that this inhabitation is at best uneven and subject to global and unequal distribution of institutional and other powers (Nuttall and Mbembe, 2009, p.196).

One way this study will incorporate knowledge derived from development scholarship and experiences from the global south is through the concept of John Galenta's power cube. Mayo (2017) presents this tool as a means communities may explore dynamics of power both external and internal to the community and at different scales:

> John Gaventa's power cube has particular relevance here as a tool for popular education, enabling communities to explore the power structures that they need to address, at different levels, both externally and internally (Gaventa, 2006). This power cube brings these different aspects of power together, setting them out in the form of a Rubik's cube, representing the different levels, spaces and forms of power:

The levels of power at:

• the global

• the national and

• the local.

The spaces of power that are:

• closed (where decisions are taken behind closed doors, away from public scrutiny)

• invited (such as public consultation spaces where people may be invited to participate) and

• claimed or created (where communities have gained access, opening previously closed spaces up for public engagement).

The different forms of power:

• visible (as with government structures, for example)

• hidden (as with the issues that never emerge on public agendas, because they are being resolved behind closed doors) or

• invisible (the attitudes that are internalised, and the self-limitations that ensue – Boal's 'cop in the head')" (Mayo, 2017, p.119-120).

This tool will be adapted as a framework to identify and further qualify different forms of power dynamics within which communities operate. Doing so allows for the community resistance work of Blackland to inform global conversations about where and how communities have the opportunity to take action against displacement. The power cube approach supports efforts aimed at "finding the spaces for change within wider structural constraints" (Mayo, 2017, p.120).

Situating the Blackland experience within the context of global community resistance to displacement provides new lens for radical planning inquiries and provides a

framework for analyzing forms of power dynamics within which communities engage in resistance. Contemporary scholars have also called for more radical planning case studies, citing a need to understand how these strategies are pursued in different institutional and sociopolitical contexts (Meth, 2010; Shrestha, 2015). To adapt a radical planning lens to case studies in the US provides an opportunity to do so while also bringing knowledge from the global south to north, as previously discussed. In order to do so, however, it is necessary to consider how dynamics of community resistance, development induced displacement, and notions of social agency or capital are shaped by dynamics of race, its intersects (class, gender, etc.), and how shared histories of resistance against institutional discrimination has forged powerful, cohesive Communities of Color.

CRITICAL RACE THEORY AND SITUATING RADICAL PLANNING IN THE GLOBAL NORTH

Applying the Global South originating lens of radical planning in the US requires a reconfiguration of interpreting community resistance in the context of US race and discriminatory dynamics. In the US, processes of development that cause large scale displacement have, like in the global south, often been structured or supported by the State and private interests, though the actual level of institutional or governmental power may have been above or below the US state. Community resistance in this context is characterized by distinctly racialized experiences made manifest through centuries of systemic and institutional discrimination that is both overt and embedded within the internal fabric of 20th century modernist and technical development. The relationship between researchers and the communities they research in contexts of marginalized communities of color is fraught and tattered by the objectification of black communities for generating white knowledge.

In order to adapt a radical planning framework for US community resistance it is necessary to incorporate perspectives of critical race theory and other bodies of critical knowledge with which race intersects. Doing so will assist in nuancing concepts of social agency and capital, confronting systemic and institutional forms of discrimination, and crafting a research approach that is committed to empowering Communities of Color rather than co-opting their knowledge and experience. To do so I will draw from two theoretical perspectives of critical race theory that provide both methodological and conceptual guidance: Black Emancipatory Action Research (BEAR) (Akom, 2011) and Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2005).

In the late 20th century new methods were introduced to the social sciences from both the global south and north that have pushed for more participatory and community driven research methods that invest value into locally-generated knowledge and critically examine dynamics of race, gender, and other intersections of structural inequality in the US (Akom, 2011). Recent scholars have begun to synthesize these diverse bodies of work in order to provide more nuanced frameworks through which communities of color may be more justly empowered. Black Emancipatory Action Research (BEAR), introduced by ethnographer Antwi A. A Akom (2011), is one such framework that is designed to assist researchers to structure their methods to more effectively recognize and engage with dynamics of race and its intersects.

In the words of Akom (2011), “BEAR is not a method per se but a research orientation that may employ a number of different qualitative and quantitative methodologies... [W]hat is distinctive about BEAR is the understanding that marginalised communities harbour critical social knowledge and should empower themselves, and be empowered, to determine what is valid or useful knowledge" (p.121). BEAR is distinguished from its root disciplines in that it calls for researchers to “foreground race

and racism in all aspects of the research process" (p.121) and to further incorporate critical perspectives on gender, class, and other intersecting experiences of marginalization to identify how different forms of discrimination are woven together to form broader patterns of oppression.

Doing so requires direct confrontation with the aspects of discrimination that are embedded internally within both traditional and more contemporary research methods and processes of knowledge production (Akom, 2011). Adopting the BEAR perspective also calls for taking an interdisciplinary research approach, incorporating a more diverse array of social and cultural disciplines to more effectively engage with the experiences of Communities of Color. Incorporating historical considerations, intersectional theory, and african-centric methods allows for a more substantive understanding of community experiences and assists the researcher in countering ways in which Communities of Color are disempowered by existing research methods. The interdisciplinary approach of BEAR also allows for a more complex, nuanced examination into the systems of oppression against which communities resist.

By employing an interdisciplinary methodology that puts race and its intersects in the foreground, a BEAR framework provides the opportunity to engage cases of community resistance by focusing on how Communities of Color possess significant internal power or social agency shaped by their shared experiences. As with radical planning BEAR recognizes that, while there is a role for external actors to play in Communities of Color, the communities themselves possess a great deal of power and agency through which they may collectively pursue a self-determined future. The focus of BEAR is on harnessing this internal agency for self-empowerment through community capacity building efforts and leadership drawn from within. By situating community capacity building within a broader interdisciplinary discourse that are able to more

effectively account for dynamics of power, oppression, and community self-empowerment, a conceptual framework can be forged to understand how communities have been able to effectively resist displacement.

COMMUNITY CAPACITY

While both radical planning and BEAR focus on community capacity building as the vehicle for facilitating community self-empowerment, there are gaps in our understanding of *how* communities are able to rally the capital required to foster collective action by a community (Smith Bengle, 2015). Insisting upon acknowledgement is the persistent quandary of why some communities are successful in their efforts to self-determine where others are either unable to collectivize or were otherwise not able to achieve their intended ends. When considering community resistance in US cities development scholars have noted that while many examples of resistance can be found, very few communities were able to effectively resist state and market driven displacement (Mayo, 2018). While many other East Austin communities lacked the capacity organize resistance, the community of Blackland was able to withstand enormous external pressures and navigate political and social arenas that were disproportionately weighted in their disfavor to resist displacement sustainably over time. To explore why this might be, at least in terms of understanding the success of Blackland, a conceptual framework for analyzing how communities act collectively is required.

Capacity in a community (or even organizational) sense has broad application across different sectors, including education and social programming. Defined nominally it refers to what capacity a community possesses to collectively effect change. This perspective differs from other modes of community engagement by situating the source of community capital within communities:

> Because communities are characterized by commonality, interdependence, and collective capacity there is an innate power in all communities; furthermore, communities possess the capacity to access this power (Smith-Bengle, 2015, p.55).

Aligning processes of community capacity building are firmly oriented towards recognizing and building upon power and capacity internal to the community. The application in a marginalized, at-risk community scenario requires attuning the definition to qualities or dimensions tied to a community's capacity to collectively activate through individuals, networks, and organizations in order to effect processes and strategies that meaningfully empower the community in decision making processes. To that end, I turn to the definition offered by Chaskin (2001) as a foundation for a more operational definition:

> Community capacity is the interaction of human capital, organizational resources, and social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve or maintain the well-being of a given community. It may operate through informal social processes and/or organized effort (p. 295).

Chaskin (2001) continues to explain that "[t[his definition can be operationalized through a relational model composed of several dimensions" (p. 295). While Chaskin's (2001) dimensions are all relevant to conceptualizing community capacity in the Blackland context, one dimension has particular relevance to measuring how community capacity is constructed. *Social agency* is the vehicle "in which [community capacity] is embedded and through which it may be engaged or enhanced" (Chaskin, 2001, p.295). It is made manifest through existing capital at the individual (human capital), organizational, and network/collective (social capital) levels and provides the necessary structure to organize types of inputs that are "brought to the table" so to speak by various types of actors.

While Chaskin's community capacity is rooted in community self-empowerment and community-driven processes, there is still the methodological concern that this framework will either devalue or fail to capture forms of capital that are unique to Communities of Color. CRT research on community capacity has shown that Communities of Color possess forms of social and cultural capital that have formed from shared experiences of oppression. These forms of capital are not only instrumental in community self-empowerment but are also less likely to be captured by community capacity models that conceptualized capacity through white, middle class norms (Yosso, 2005). One of the most concerning shortcomings in otherwise well-meaning research is the tendency to consider Communities of Color in terms of deficiency.

A significant influence on the discourse of community capacity and knowledge capital is Bourdieu's (1977) work on cultural capital, which asserts that cultural, social, and economic capital is "possessed and inherited by privileged groups in society" (Yosso, 2005, p.76) either through generational transfer or education. These forms of capital are concentrated amongst the privileged or elite who are most effectively able to access the limited means of cultural and social capital reproduction. Embedded in this theory (though likely not Bourdieu's intent) is the notion that there are specific forms of cultural or social capital that allows for individuals and communities to prosper, and these forms of capital are subjectively defined in relation to white, middle class values (p.76).

This raises the concern that an approach to community resistance and/or development that focuses on the types of capital necessary to effect desired change may be structurally compromised by racial bias with regard to what types of capital are valued and what is contained within each category of capital. There are also considerations to be made about how wealth and assets are defined when researching communities of color. While many of the elements of white-normative community capacity are not irrelevant to

the wellbeing of non-white communities, there are other forms of wealth been produced or grown from the "histories and lives of Communities of Color" (p.77) that fall outside of the white-centric definition.

Forms of Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2006, p.76-81)	
Aspirational capital	The ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers
Linguistic capital	The intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style (see Faulstich Orellana, 2003).
Familial capital	Those cultural knowledges nurtured among familia (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition (see Delgado Bernal, 1998, 2002).
Social capital	Networks of people and community resources. These peer and other social contacts can provide both instrumental and emotional support to navigate through society's institutions (see Gilbert, 1982; Stanton-Salazar, 2001).
Navigational capital	Skills of maneuvering through social institutions. Historically, this infers the ability to maneuver through institutions not created with Communities of Color in mind.
Resistant capital	Those knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality… This form of cultural wealth is grounded in the legacy of resistance to subordination exhibited by Communities of Color (Deloria, 1969).

Table 2.1: Forms of Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2006, p.76-81)

Integrating CRT into a community capacity framework requires the methodological means to effectively identify and account for the "[f]orms of cultural capital that marginalized groups bring to the table that traditional cultural capital theory does not recognize or value" (Yasso, 2005, p.77). To do so I will draw from a body of

CRT research that uses a community cultural wealth lens to identify these forms of capital and how they might contribute to the dynamics of community capacity building. Defined by Yasso (2005) as "an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed and utilized by Communities of Color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression" (p.77), community cultural wealth can be operationalized through 6 dimensions of social or cultural capital (see Table 1) that assists in identifying key forms of capital involved in successful community resistance.

These forms of capital are readily synthesizable with the existing forms of capital drawn from Chaskin's concept of social agency, and will not only provide a more accurate analysis of community resistance in Blackland, but will further ensure that vital considerations of race and the shared experiences of Communities of Color are appropriately recognized. While this framework of dimensions around community capacity provides a valuable means for analyzing internal community dynamics, there remains a need to account for the complex power dynamics embedded historically, socially, economically, and institutionally within the systems of oppression against which the Blackland community resisted. With this in mind I return to Gaventa's power cube as a means to integrate considerations of external power dynamics within a community capacity framework.

As planning theories emerged in the late 20th century to form new modes of more equitable community engagement based on community-driven processes, they often neglected to account for systems of power and mechanisms of institutional discrimination and oppression that shape shared community experiences and the forms of resistance they produce (Smith Bengle, 2015). As the previous discussion on global community resistance dynamics has shown, how communities use their capacity to resist displacement is largely dependent upon the force of external power structure (s) against

which they resist. The forms of external power structures and the types of actors through which they operate vary greatly, but can be managed through a framework adopted from John Gaventa's "'power cube'" (2006, p.25). This framework breaks down forms of power into 3 dimensions: forms, levels, and spaces (in different forms, at different levels of influence, across different spatial scales). Integrating these dimensions of power within a framework of community capacity will provide additional analytical structure to more effectively explore histories of oppression wherein defined forms of federal, state, and local discriminatory procedure were exercised in Blackland and informed their resistance strategies.

CONCLUSION

Through employing a radical planning perspective structured by frameworks that measure community capacity and power dynamics, this study seeks to draw out more complete understandings of Blackland community resistance. In doing so I intend to contribute to both contemporary forms of community-driven modes of planning thought and the broader global discourse concerning community displacement and resistance that has become a shared experience for hundreds of millions of marginalized urban communities through the global south *and* north. This pursuit is motivated by the call by contemporary planning scholars for more radical planning case studies, citing a need to understand how these strategies are pursued in different institutional and sociopolitical contexts (Meth, 2010; Shrestha, 2015). Similar calls from international development and forced displacement scholars to incorporate considerations of community resistance and dynamics from the global south provide the means to contextualize the case further within a broader discourse of resistance, particularly in the context of development induced displacement.

By answering these calls, it is my hope to contribute new insights drawn from the incredible work of a community that has been largely excluded from both planning and local historical consideration. By adopting additional perspectives drawn from critical race theory, a more nuanced investigation can be undertaken to understand how the shared experiences of Communities of Color provide a source of strength in those communities that can be leveraged through unique forms of community cultural wealth to support resistance activities. Further integration of analytical mechanisms that assist in accounting for the external power dynamics against which communities resist will provide a greater depth of understanding as to how the Blackland community, and others with similar shared histories, may effect change through harnessing their internal strengths and capacities.

Chapter 3: History of Blackland and Austin's Racial Hierarchy of Segregation

To understand the dynamics of resistance and self-empowerment in Communities of Color, one must look not just to the times they resisted but also to the shared histories and experiences that shape the foundation of their internal power. The Blackland community came to be as a result of historic patterns of racism and oppression that segregated and systematically oppressed communities of color in Austin, and these processes were deeply embedded in the city's efforts to facilitate economic development and manage growth throughout its history. This chapter first seeks to understand some of the shared historical experiences of Communities of Color and how the city of Austin's racialized land use policies fostered patterns of segregation and systematic oppression. Doing so provides the base layer upon which Blackland may be placed within the historic fabric of Austin in order to better understand the community, their community cultural wealth, and the socio-spatial context within which they operated. The final section of this chapter outlines the ascension of UT Austin from state university to a land developer agent of the state, which sets the stage for the following chapter on Blackland's resistance to their development agenda.

AUSTIN UNDER JIM CROW: THE PRE-CONSTRUCTION OF SEGREGATION

Prior to the civil war, the City of Austin was composed primarily of white American or European immigrants. Much of the land in what would become east Austin (which will be discussed in greater detail shortly) was ideal for a variety of agricultural uses, particularly cotton, which resulted in an early wave of forced migration as slaves were brought to the area to labor on these new, highly profitable cash-crop farms (East Austin Historic Survey, 2016, p.16). The reconstruction era, manifesting in Austin as

early as 1865, saw the establishment of several freedmen communities on the east side (See Figure 1). These communities were composed of freedmen from throughout the surrounding rural area, as well as those who chose to remain in Austin. Drawn to agricultural work in the outlots and service jobs in the city core, their proximity to both gave them significantly greater access to employment, services, and the decent infrastructure needed to traverse between. Freedmen communities were tight-knit and able to leverage the (limited) political support for freedmen's property rights to earn symbolic names (Pleasant Hill, Masontown, Robertson Hill), many of which still stand today and continue to mark their place in the area's history (East Austin Historical Survey, 2016).

While it would be several decades and one World War before the city would codify segregation with the 1928 plan, Jim Crow policies under the separate but equal doctrine exerted significant pressure over communities of color and drove early patterns of segregatory migration to the east side. During the waning years of the 19th century many black residents and migrants choose to move to the eastern outlots of their own volition in order to pursue the same employment and housing opportunities that drove early freedmen, but many black communities continued to prosper amongst the white majority in the city core (East Austin Historic Survey, 2016). As the city continued to grow through the late 19th century, land development pressures drove white officials to seek out Jim Crow sanctioned strategies for displacing these communities of color from the west side. To do so the city began a gradual process of relocating key community institutions, particularly churches and schools, in order to draw non-white residents to the eastern outlots (East Austin Historic Survey, 2016).

Figure 3. 1: Map of Austin Freedman's Communities c. 1891 - Source: Austin History Center

These strategies for forced migration were incredibly effective, as these community institutions (and specifically churches) were the thread and needle that knit communities of color together amidst the white majority city core:

> During the early years of the 20th Century, African Americans occupied settlements in various parts of the city of Austin. By and large, these residential

> communities had churches at their core. Some had Black-run businesses and schools for African American youth. Though surrounded by Anglo neighborhoods, these island enclaves functioned as fairly autonomous residential neighborhoods often organized around family ties, common religious practices, and connection to pre-emancipation slave-status relationships with common slave holders/land owners (East Austin Cultural Heritage District, 2015).

The role of schools in particular was a strong pull factor leveraged to force migration due to the more rigid application of Jim Crow. Whereas many churches and other civil services may have had black and white areas, allowing separate but equal access, schools were strictly separated by race and could create a more severe burden on families trying to remain in the city core. The city was further able to severely limit the ability for communities of color to remain by locating black schools exclusively on the east side:

> The high school moved to new brick buildings at 1607 Pennsylvania Avenue (not extant). The buildings, based on the same plan as schools for white children in Hyde Park and in South Austin, had the honor of being the 'largest negro high school building in the state.' As the only secondary school for Black children in the city, E. H. Anderson High School drew Black families from predominantly white neighborhoods in other areas of the city. Ultimately, many of these families moved east of East Avenue to be close to the school. In the 1920s, families left Wheatville because the city's only high school for African Americans was in East Austin andrequired a 'good long walk' (East Austin Historic Survey, 2016, p.44**)**

Further limiting the choice of communities of color was the early presence of restrictive covenants, which were private agreements between white land owners that often employed deed restrictions to guarantee that white neighborhoods would remain white by barring sale to non-whites. Deed restrictions, being private and not subject to same legal scrutiny as zoning or other municipal land use controls, would continue to proliferate and adapt to changing times, proving to be a legally durable means of enforcing segregation. When in the late 1940s the Supreme Court deemed municipally structured racial segregation to be unenforceable there was already "a large portion of Austin's land… under a host of other private rules that regulated land-use, regulations

that remain largely in force today (Tretter, 2012, p.4). While Jim Crow laws would permit the city to leverage the separate but equal principle to manipulate the location of civic services in order to control non-white residential patterns, members of the white business elite were still in search of a more systematic governmental mechanism for racial segregation. As the Supreme Court had ruled racial zoning was unconstitutional in 1917, the city was forced to devise more devious means of doing so, and they found their answer with the Dallas planning firm Koch and Folwer.

> In our studies in Austin we have found that the negroes are present in small numbers, in practically all sections of the city, excepting the area just east of East Avenue and south of the City Cemetery. This area seems to be all negro population. It is our recommendation that the nearest approach to the solution of the race segregation problem will be the recommendation of this district as a negro district; and that all the facilities and conveniences be provided the negroes in this district, as an incentive to draw the negro population to this area. This will eliminate the necessity of duplication of white and black schools, white and black parks, and other duplicate facilities for this area. We are recommending that sufficient area be acquired adjoining the negro high school to provide adequate space for a complete negro play-field in connection with the negro high school. We further recommend that the negro schools in this area be provided with ample and adequate play ground space and facilities similar to the white schools of the city.

Figure 3. 2: Excerpt from *A City Plan for Austin, Texas* - Source: Koch and Fowler, 1928

As can be seen in a frequently referenced excerpt from the 1928 Koch and Fowler plan (Figure 3.2), the logic of segregation embedded within the plan fell easily into the well-worn tracks the city had established in the preceding decades. Their rationale for segregating all non-white folk to the eastern outlots was largely related to the difficulty of providing municipal services for black residents in addition to white residents located throughout the city core. In a bid to simplify the process and reduce the cost burden of providing duplicated service, the city aimed to concentrate all non-white residents within one area of the city and in doing so would only have to concern themselves with providing non-white services in that area. Schools, parks, and other public services were to be provided by the city only in the eastern outlots with the explicit intention of forcibly displacing people of color within the city core (Koch and Fowler, 1928, p.28). The most effective tool in addition to those already mentioned was to restrict the provision of basic utility services (water, waste, road infrastructure, etc.) to the eastern outlots for any non-white residential purposes. The city may not have been permitted to segregate people, but they could segregate utilities, so that is exactly what they would do (Tretter, 2012).

BUILDING A HIERARCHY OF RACIAL SEGREGATION

The dimensions through which a racially segregated city were made manifest are not solely spatial. The driving force of urbanization and growth in the US during the early 20th century was the social progressivism movement, which manifested in the south in the form of "'business progressivism,' which, in cities, advocated the expansion and efficiency of public services to facilitate urban and economic growth more than programs to enhance public welfare" (Tretter, 2012, p.7). As with many southern cities, the development path of Austin became increasingly influenced by a growing class of urban white business elites in whose pallid image the contemporary southern city was to be

designed (Tretter, 2012). Doing so required not only an objectification but outright denigration of non-white communities against which their pale horse would appear superior and their white supremacy within the southern racial hierarchy could be maintained.

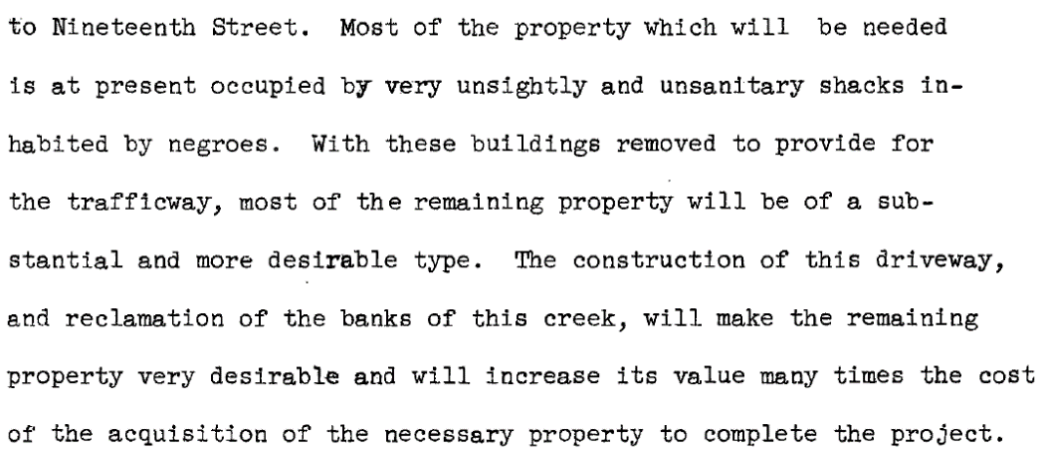
to Nineteenth Street. Most of the property which will be needed is at present occupied by very unsightly and unsanitary shacks inhabited by negroes. With these buildings removed to provide for the trafficway, most of the remaining property will be of a substantial and more desirable type. The construction of this driveway, and reclamation of the banks of this creek, will make the remaining property very desirable and will increase its value many times the cost of the acquisition of the necessary property to complete the project.

Figure 3. 3: Excerpt from *A City Plan for Austin, Texas* - Source: Koch and Fowler, 1928

This can be seen casually encoded within the language of Koch and Folwer (Figure 3.3), who regularly disparaged the quality of black residences and neighborhoods in order to justify their removal for facilities of greater desirability and value. The facilities that would replace the black community space categorized as undesirable within the eastern outlots would be largely industrial, or uses otherwise deemed too much a nuisance for white space. White supremacy in the southern racial hierarchy would be further imposed upon communities of color through the provision of non-white municipal services in heinous ways. In the language shown in figure 2, one of three parks to be developed in the newly designated “negro district” (Koch and Fowler, p.57) was not only planned upon space that was already occupied by black residences (which were most likely *not* shacks) but was to be directly adjacent to a new arterial street. This park would

also be in close proximity to a rerouting of the International and Great Northern Railroad, an distinctly racialized decision:

> To remove industrial 'nuisances' from Central and West Austin, Koch and Fowler recommended that I–GN trains bypass those areas, through which their tracks ran at the time, and instead use the H&TC tracks that ran through the East Austin. By removing the I–GN tracks from the town's west side, industries serviced by them would move to the new industrial district on the east side, creating more desirable residential areas in West Austin and less desirable living conditions in the proposed "negro district" (East Austin Historic Survey, 2016, p.59).

The 1928 plan codified the segregation of municipal services, and through doing so also embedded a language of white supremacy and the subjugation of non-white communities. It was, however, only one piece in the broader mosaic of public *and* private mechanisms for reinforcement that allowed segregation to persist past the civil rights era and through to the 21st century (Tretter, 2012). Restrictive covenants proved a stubborn and legally-resilient strategy to maintain the whiteness of preferred community space. Real estate and finance interests, beginning in 1935 with the Home Owners' Loan Corporation survey and subsequent Real Estate Map that 'red lined' east austin, would pursue a range of strategies that worked in accordance with municipal land use regulations and private covenants to perpetuate a strict segregationist regime (Tretter, 2012). In doing so, they would set in motion a pattern of speculatory manipulation of land in east austin for the sake of economic development that would manifest repeatedly, as it does still today.

PLACING BLACKLAND IN HISTORIC SPACE

> "The ironic twist here is that, even given the harsh social and political realities of the day, Central East Austin internally nurtured all of the essential elements found in healthy communities. In the face of racial discrimination, forced segregation and unaddressed poverty and neglect, the East Austin African American community established schools and churches, cultural institutions, commercial business corridors, and a professional and civic leadership class that went about

> the business of sustaining the Black Community" (East Austin Cultural Heritage District)

The above passage from the East Austin Cultural Heritage District speaks of exactly the sort of community cultural wealth that Yasso (2016) refers to and is the basis of the great power and potential embodied in communities of color. As they faced the most severe of systemic oppression, segregation, and institutional discrimination, they rallied together to create vibrant communities with strong social networking ties that would nourish and sustain the spirit of resistance in later days. The part of the eastern outlots upon which Blackland remains standing strong today was north of where most freedman communities and other pre-1928 communities of color resided, yet its formation as a community of its own was deeply influenced by those who came before and would be part of a broader fabric of community ties that made up east Austin leading up to the civil rights era.

Though the boundaries of the Blackland were not always agreed upon, they are clearly defined today. The streets that bound the Blackland neighborhood, as stated on the BCDC website's front page, are "Comal Street on the west, Chestnut Avenue on the east, MLK Boulevard on the south, and Manor Road on the north" (Blackland Community Development Corporation). They are presented proudly, and the same definition will be found in any credible publication detailing the area. The land on which Blackland resides, however, has a lengthy history extending back to the original Austin surveys of the early/mid-19th century that laid a foundation for the metamorphosis of Waterloo into the new Texas capital, Austin.

The area that would become Blackland was the northern portion of the original eastern out-lots and can be seen in the 1840 William Sandusky map titled "A Topographic Map of the Tract adjoining the City of Austin" (Figure 3.4).The skewed

angle of the lots relative to the roughly north-south alignment of the core city grid was an intentional application of flexibility. The existing landscape was shaped by Boggy Creek, native trees, and beautiful prairie landscapes that warranted a less rigid form (East Austin Historic Survey, 2016). The land was originally sold for agricultural use following the 1840 suvery, though as mentioned previously it was always intended to provide for future urban expansion. Blackland prairie soil, particularly at the time the out-lots were settled, was one of the highest quality soils for agriculture in the south and stretched roughly 300 miles from the small cattle town of San Antonio to the Red River in northern Texas.

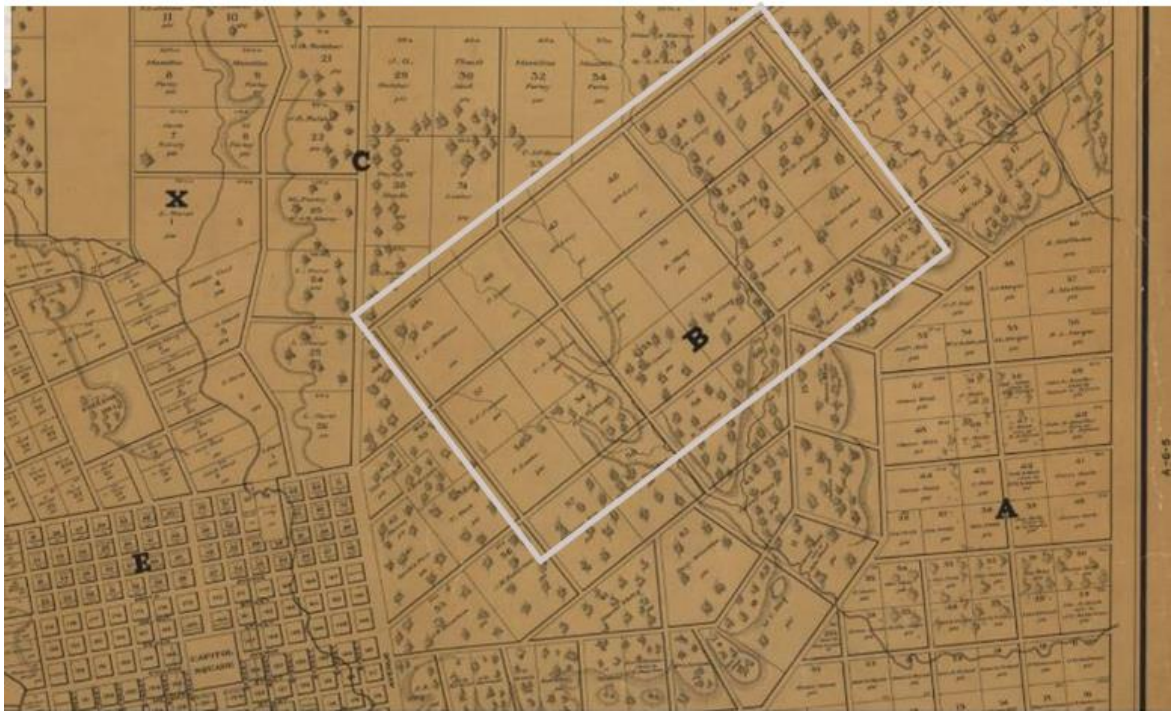

Figure 3. 4: Portion of "A Topographic Map of the Tract adjoining the City of Austin" by William Sandusky, 1840, with Blackland tracts highlighted - Source: Austin Historic Center

The original settlers of what would eventually become Blackland were primarily Swedish and German farmers who specialized in Cotton (McCarver, 1995), one of the

primary cash crops grown throughout the Blackland prairie region. The name Blackland, like the community's boundaries, was an intentional designation, with its roots literally taken from the earth (McCarver, 1995); the out-lots that composed the area had dark, fertile soil characteristic of blackland prairie, so the Swedish farmers who settled there dubbed the area the 'Blacklands' (Tretter, 2015). It was following the rapid population growth Austin experienced in the decades following the civil war that the built environment of what will eventually become Blackland begins to manifest. This growth brought significant improvement and extensions to transportation infrastructure, which precipitated the first wave of eastward development anticipated when the outlots were originally surveyed (East Austin Historic Survey, 2016).

The plot size in the outlots was much larger than in the city core, and while the 1840 grid is still present in east Austin today, by the mid-1870s most of the original plots were undergoing the process of subdivision to accommodate the increased population. The first formal settlement of the Blackland area on record was in 1876:

> North of Swede Hill, another enclave of immigrants settled what was later known as the "Winn Community"... . It extended over an area roughly bound by present-day North IH-35 Frontage Road, Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, Chestnut Street, and Manor Road. Its beginnings date to 1876 when Charles Alff, a German immigrant, purchased land for 35 cents an acre (East Austin Historic Survey, 2016 p.23).

The Swedish and German structures built on the subdivided lots (ca 1876) reflected the practical aesthetics of their makers:

> The wooden frame homes were practically designed and accommodated large families with multiple bedrooms. The homes featured numerous, double-hung windows and high ceilings. The foundations were constructed of cedar peers, the most abundant hardwood in the area. These peers "floated" in the continuously swelling and shrinking blackland soil— a condition that required frequent leveling to prevent windows and doors from sticking. …[m]any of the original Swedish houses remain in use over a century after their construction. Those homes that do not survive to this date were mainly destroyed by natural disasters,

> neglect, or by electrical fires caused by overload and fragile electrical wiring… The Swedes preferred the privacy afforded by space, a remnant of their farm heritage. (Upper Boggy Creek Master Plan, 2002)

The Winn Community moniker was added in 1907 when the area became host to John B. Winn Elementary, one of the first elementary schools in the eastern outlots and named for the first Superintendent of the Austin School District (East Austin Historic Survey, 2016, p.43). Manor road, the northern boundary of Blackland appears on maps beginning in 1925 and was also a section the new State Highway 20 that connected Austin with Houston (p.39-40). Both Manor road and 19th street (now Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, see Figure 3.5) were designated by the city in the 1928 plan and other municipal documents as major arterials to support the city's continual growth and development.

Figure I-50. Side-by-side comparison of photographs taken of East 19th Street looking east, before paving (left) and after paving (right). Source (photo on left): Jordan-Ellison, *Unpaved Nineteenth Street*, July 19, 1930, photograph, accessed June 30, 2016, https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth125183/, University of North Texas Libraries, *The Portal to Texas History*. Photo on right: Jordan-Ellison. *Nineteenth Street looking east*, October 31, 1930, photograph, accessed June 30, 2016, https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth125182/, University of North Texas Libraries, *The Portal to Texas History*.

Figure 3. 5 – Source: East Austin Historic Survey, 2016, p.85

Following the 1928 Koch and Fowler plan, Blackland and other similarly situated neighborhoods in East Austin were the imposed destination for not only the city's black population but further "became the areas of immigration for [all] nonwhites" due to blanket exclusion of people of any color from restrictive covenants (Tretter, 2015). Many of the white, Swedish residents chose to leave the area in response to this migration, whether out of antipathy or a more benign motive. These houses were purchased by incoming black migrants, while other houses remained occupied by white families who opted to remain in the neighborhood (McCarver, 1995). Pre-dating the very modern notion of 'in-fill' by half a century, it was in between these pre-existing, Swedish built homes that new black migrants found their own space. This process of adoption, described in the following excerpt by The East End Cultural Heritage District, was one process of many that shaped the residential style of Blackland:

> "The new black settlers followed in the trend of their Swedish predecessors, constructing wood-frame houses in the spaces between the existing structures. These wood-frame structures retained much of the architectural style characteristic of the Blackland neighborhood. Their exterior walls bore wooden siding and their windows, tall, narrow, and often grouped in pairs, wooden paneling that separated them from the rest of the house exterior. These newer homes included electricity and plumbing in the original plans, but had lower ceilings and less space. Many of the owners living in them later built onto the original structure to accommodate growing families, often without regard to city codes."

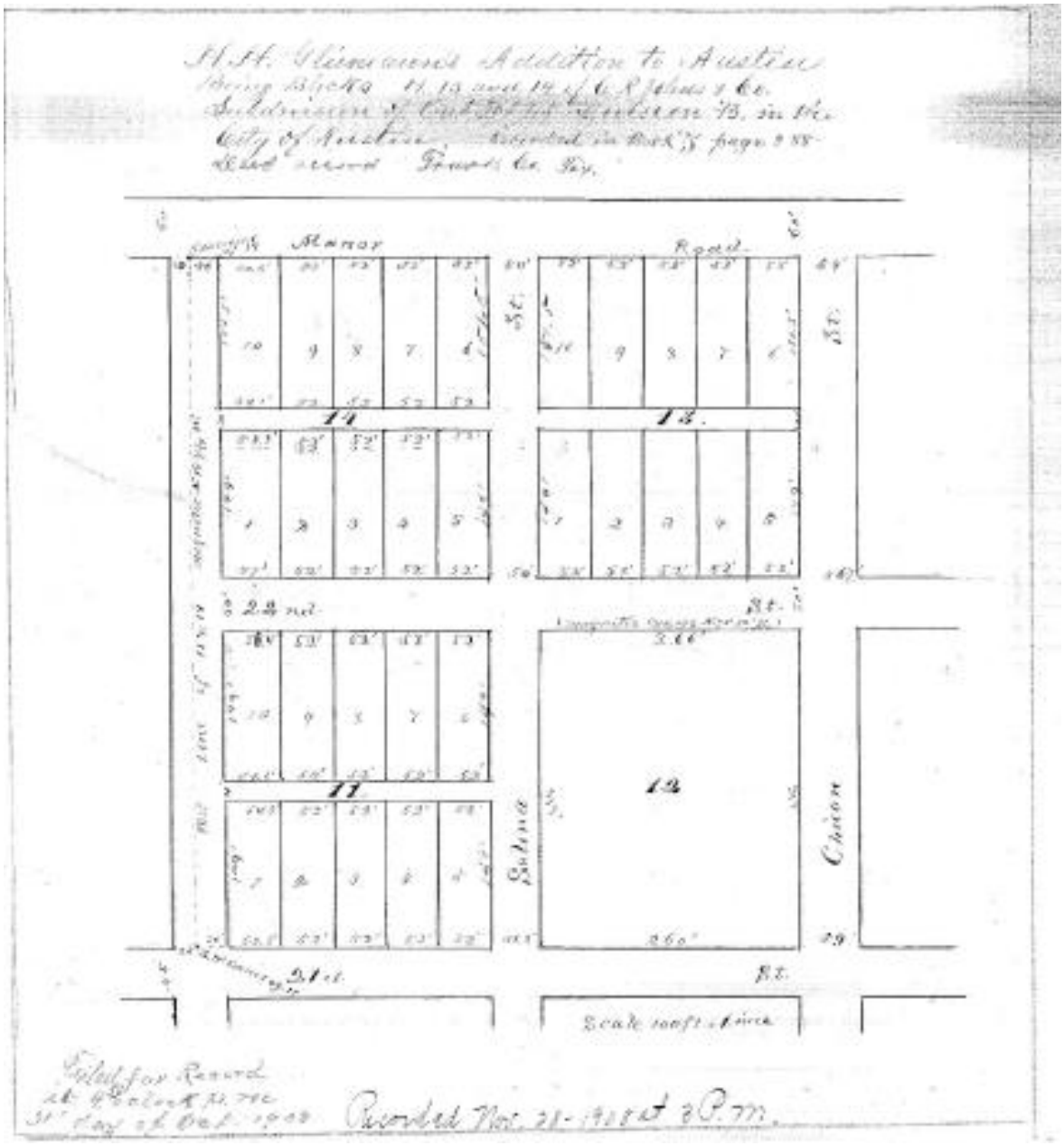

Figure 3. 6: Early subdivision of Blackland tracts c. 1908 - Source: East Austin Historic Survey, 2016

Tracing the development of Blackland's built environment over time outside of the anecdotes provided above is difficult, in part because the area developed in a

piecemeal fashion that was characteristic of residential development through the eastern outlots following World War 2. The first clear shift in the built environment of Blackland can be traced to 1908, where the blocks between Leona, Chicon, Manor, and 19th street were subdivided into the basic lot structure still present today (Figure 3.6). It was in the late 1940s following WWII that residential development patterns began to shift north of 19th street and into the Blackland area. During this time a second wave of residential expansion began that would continue through the end of the 1960s (as shown in Figure 3.7) and shape much of the Blackland that is there today. The end result is represented by Figure 3.8) which shows current buildings in Blackland that qualify for historic registry, as well as the myriad of subdivisions that illustrate the piecemeal pattern that resulted in a mosaic of building types, proto-ADUs, and the existing historic stock.

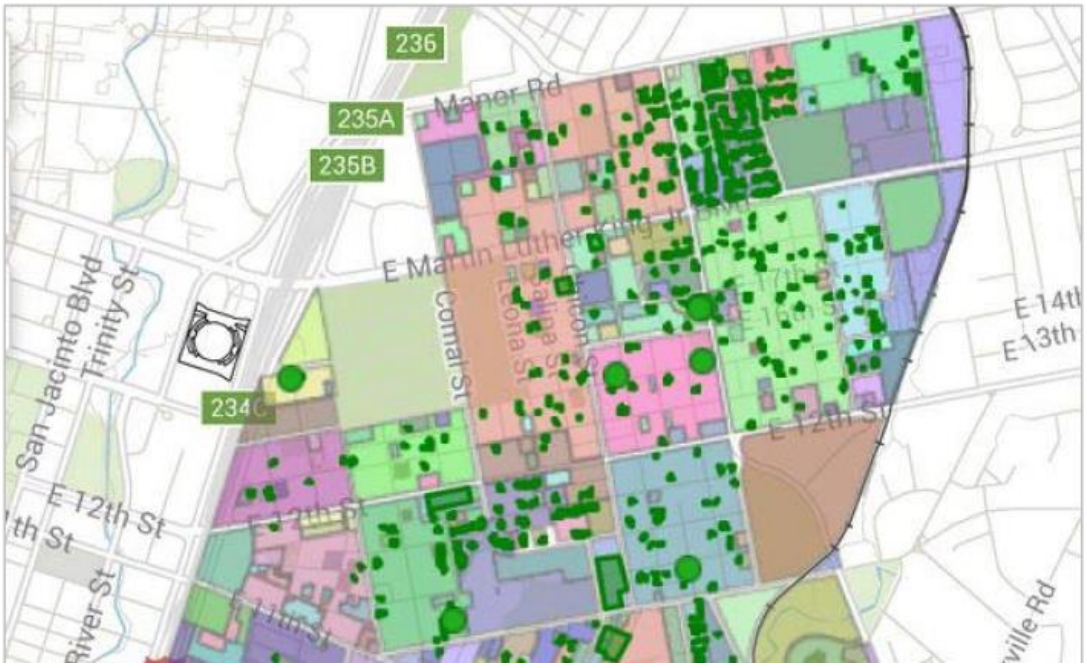

Figure 3. 7 – Source: East Austin Historic Survey, 2016 (Green dots represent residential developments from 1947-1969)

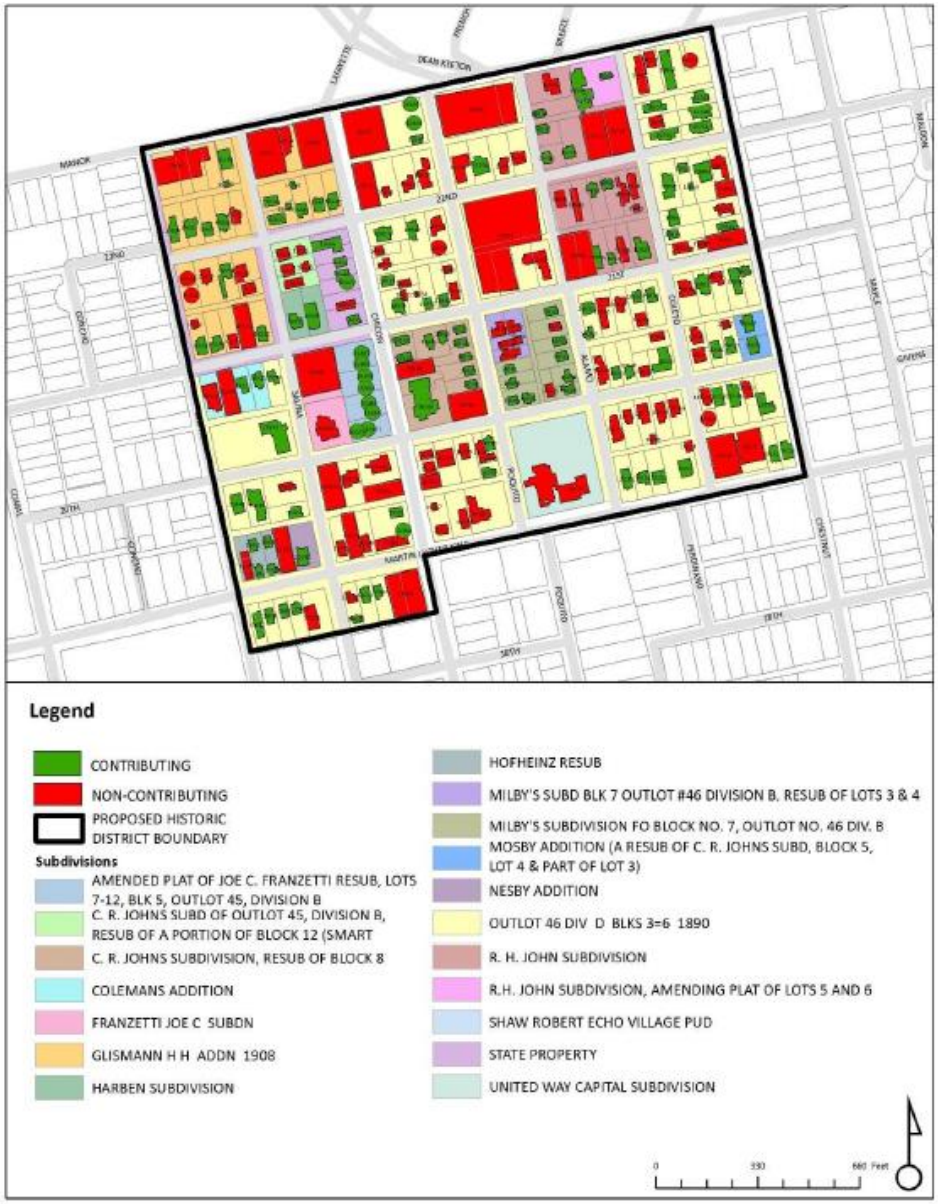

Figure 3. 8: Map of all historic subdivisions of Blackland Tracts - Source: East Austin Historic Survey, 2016

Between the years following the 1928 plan and the advent of World War II, this area was home to one of, if not the earliest integrated communities in Austin (McCarver, 1995). As communities of color continued to grow and prosper in the face of oppression,

many European immigrant enclaves continued to live on the East side, benefitting from the formalization of Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard (at that time 19th street, see figure 3.4) and Manor Road as main traffic arteries (East Austin Historic Survey, 2016). Manor Road and 19th would eventually become to southern and northern boundary of Blackland, respectively. The Western boundary was largely subject to the presence of UT Austin, which as early as 1928 had begun looking to the Blackland area for future development needs. The Eastern boundary was the only one contested within the community, and eventually settled on Chestnut Avenue (McCarver, 1995). While these boundaries were not formally accepted for the Blackland community until later, this early conception informed the oral histories that would eventually serve to reconcile later border conflicts.

It was also during this time that the name Blackland became a formal community designation. Originally referred to as "the blacklands", notably *plural* and rooted in "land", there was no racial connotation. Rather, the name was for the fertile soils that drew Swedish immigrants to the original lots. Yet in the mid-20th century, as the population shifted towards a strong black majority in direct result of municipally-sponsored racially motivated segregation, new meanings began to take form. The uniform change, dropping the "s" to get Blackland, was shared amongst both white and black folk. The meaning, however, is where an unfortunately predictable split occurred. To (some) white folk, as one might expect, the name took on a decidedly racist tone that one can likely imagine for oneself. To the black community, however, this term was associated with a shared community with explicit recognition of the city's history of segregation. This question regarding the meaning of Blackland would persist throughout the entirely of the community's modern founding and fight for the right to its space (McCarver, 1995).

The history of east Austin and the resiliency of its Communities forms the stage for the story of Blackland Resistance. The background, representing the communal life experience in Blackland, is to be one of a vibrant community amongst vibrant communities who have claimed their place and made it home, despite the forceful segregationist motion that put them there. This background, however, is no dramatization. According to historical records, the area of Blackland and many of it is primarily black neighboring communities were working class (McCarver, 1995). They were not, however, without any goodness in life. These communities had a distinct fabric made of steel wool, made strong by the shared struggles of segregation and the joy in life overcoming adversity.

Figure 3. 9: Photograph of Robert “Fudd” Shaw c.1950s - Source: Michael Corcoran, 2014

Blackland members took part in the “Chitlin Circuit,” a kickin’ 50s-60s era blues scene centered on E. 11th to the south. The neighborhood was called home by legendary boogie-woogie piano player Robert “Fudd” Shaw (Figure 3.9), who operated Shaw’s Food Market, a barbeque/grocer colloquially referred to as the “Stop ‘n’ Swat” (Michael Corcoran, 2014) on Manor road that drew folk from all around the east side (East End Cultural Heritage District). His Barrelhouse piano style was legendary, as was his barbeque. Long before there was ever a Franklins BBQ there was Shaw’s Food Market, where blues and BBQ created community:

> "Ask anyone in town, ask the secret service men who've been trotting out to Shaw's Food Market, or ask Lyndon Johnson: Who makes the best spare ribs? Who sells the best 'hot guts' sausage around here, Mr. President? Anyone'll tell you" (Colorado Blues Society).

This is the community that UT looked to displace when our story begins, not in harsh and brutish urbanity of The Jungle, but in the resilient and vivacious community of Blackland.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE TOWER: UT’S INSTITUTIONAL HEGEMONY

In 1966, UT was experiencing a newfound level of support and collaboration from the city’s business community. Federal funding for university research saw marked increases during this time as urban growth proponents saw the production of knowledge as key to a modern, high-tech economy (Tretter, 2015). State and city governments were further compelled by the availability of HUD funds and other federal program subsidies designed to support the modernist planning mechanisms of urban renewal (Tretter, 2015; East Austin Historic Survey, 2016). The city of Austin had made considerations to the role the University of Texas could play in generating economic growth as far back as the

1928 plan, where provisions were included that laid the foundation for eventual University encroachment into the eastern outlots.

Following the original 1840 plotting of the eastern outlots, the State of Texas and its capital city were in a prime position to take advantage of the burgeoning national investments being made in knowledge production. As if in anticipation of the role it was destined to play, the University had already experienced significant growth during the first half of the 20th century, and UT's enrollment numbers were rising steadily each year. While the University was not lacking in funds to support campus growth, they were lacking in space; the campus is in the heart of the city core and was surrounded by mostly white residential areas to the north and west that were immune from the burdens of city development needs.

In an effort to streamline the process of acquiring the land necessary to support an expansion of university facilities, which was justified by sustained enrollment growth, the Texas legislature granted the power of eminent domain directly to UT's Board of Regents in 1965, allowing the university to acquire property for public use without requiring legislative approval. That same year, UT leadership resolved to take immediate advantage of this opportunity to begin acquiring land at current market rates for projects not actually intended to start until 1975 (Tretter, 2015). Consistent with the modernist ethic, they believed that growth for the university meant growth for the city; that they had a constitutional right to take land through eminent domain for this purpose; and that in doing so the complete effacing of neighborhoods would be a necessary evil, if an evil at all (Tretter, 2015). Leaning on a historic precedence for eastward expansion stretching back to 'time immemorial,' they set their target for annexations on their immediate eastward neighbors, the Blackland community.

The extent of UT's campus expansion planning was not determined solely by the

University. A major actor in developing UT's annexation agenda was the Austin Urban Renewal Agency (AURA), a quasi-governmental private non-profit formed by the city in 1962 for purposes of slum clearance and combatting blight. Composed of the city council, planners, and members of the business community, the organizational purpose was a testament to the disdain for the 'blighted' east side held by city officials and the business community. (Tretter, 2015). The creation of AURA had been possible 3 years earlier in 1959 when city urban renewal officials successfully lobbied for passage of the State Urban Renewal Act, which formally enabled the City to form an urban renewal agency by referendum.

The formation of AURA via referendum in 1962 made possible the scale of UT's annexations in 1966 by tying the University's expansion to City's newfound urban renewal authority. This collaboration also allowed the University to deeply subsidize the cost of land acquisitions where their 'urban renewal' projects met federal approval through the two-for-one credit program created by the 1959 Housing Act. With federal project approval the University could also secure funding to cover the cost of relocating the displaced, fundamentally normalizing future displacement within its institutional development rationale. Made possible through AURA, the University was now positioned with significant support from both the City and Federal Government and the funding it required to secure such a massive acquisition. This was the hegemony the University had constructed, which Blackland would fight to depose.

The first draw was taken by UT in 1966, when they announced their intention to expand eastward through the annexation. Tretter's (2015, p.48) recount is illustrating:

> The extent of the announced eastward expansion in 1966 was stunning. It was going to be the largest single land expansion since the university's inception. Reflected in the headline of a local paper—"UT to Knife Deep into East Austin"—the proposal included the seizure of over 140 acres to the east of the

> university, including over four hundred parcels and displacing approximately three hundred homeowners and hundreds of renters.

Even at this juncture, residents of Blackland and surrounding communities brought civil resistance to public hearings on the matter. As the community would come to learn, however, a hegemonic organization like the UT growth coalition often uses such public forums not as open spaces for participation but as rhetorical gestures to coopt and integrate opposing voices without changing the status quo (Miraftab, 2009). Their voices were heard, noted, and then duly disregarded. Though UT did reign in the area of the 1966 annexations from 140 to 100 acres, they did so only because there was not enough dilapidated housing available to qualify for HUD support. The lack of supposed 'blight' required to receive HUD funding, rather than community pressure, was the decider (Tretter, 2015).

Though bringing the noise at public hearings proved ineffective, this brazen annexation campaign inspired the formation of early neighborhood organizations, such as the Blackshear Neighborhood Association, which narrowly avoided annexation through "fierce resident opposition" (East Austin Historic Survey, 2016, p.144) and "intense organizing and legal maneuvering" (McCarver, 1995, p.24). This early activism (or at the least awareness and vocal rejection) was otherwise unsuccessful in stopping UT, however, as the first round of takings happened too quickly to properly react (McCarver, 1995). By the time people rallied to contest this encroachment, the fight was over. Or rather, there was really no fight to be had. The testimonial of Blackland residents provide a hard look:

> 'We were given a check for our homes and a bus ticket out of town,' said Dixie Conner, who managed to buy another home just east of the expansion on Leona Street Conner said, 'They showed up on my porch and told me I had 30 days to move. They offered me a price for my place. That was it I took it and bought a place just east of where they said they were stopping.' 13 'We really didn't have

> time to organize,' said June Brewer. They already had all the angles figured. We were beaten from the outset'14
>
> Blackland resident Katherine Poole had just moved into the neighborhood and built a home on Leona Street. She said that she knew very few of her neighbors and that when the annexation came, 'it was over before I knew what had happened. I barely knew what was going on. The papers said almost nothing.' 15 (McCarver, 1995, p.25).

While this initial round of takings stopped at Comal, UT's resolution to resume eastern annexation was well understood in the development and real estate community. Between 1967 and 1982, speculators took possession of large swaths of the area. Acting mostly as absentee landlords, they allowed these properties to deteriorate into dilapidation (McCarver, 1995). Their motives were less than subtle – not only did they save money by not investing in maintenance, they actively helped drive towards providing what UT needed: more dilapidated houses. Nearly two decades of aggressive dispossession and neglect by absentee landlords had drastic impact on the Blackland built environment, pushing it much closer to the site of blight and slum conditions UT wished to impose.

When Austin experienced a new wave of growth at the beginning of the 1980s, the well-established pattern of looking to the old eastern outlots to provide space for development returned. The university's intention to resume their earlier expansion campaign had never waned, and as development pressure began to drive land values up the pressure began to rise for UT to take action. With Blackland conditioned for condemnation, UT now had the necessary economic rationale needed to begin renewed annexation: if prices are only going to go up, there's no time like the present.

Chapter 4: The Battle of Blackland

> Bureaucratic explanations could not compete with Dixie Connor, white-headed and proudly defiant, when he appeared on the news saying, “They come and they take what you've got And they give you something for it - but it's never as much as you had” (McCarver, 1995)

THE MIRACLE ON 19TH STREET

The word miracle is hardly an academic term. Yet when James William McCarver Jr. used the title “The Blackland Miracle” for his dissertation, which was based on 12 years of direct participation in the decade-long showdown between the Blackland neighborhood and the University of Texas at Austin, he was by no means off-base. The fight for the Blackland neighborhood, waged by the Blackland Neighborhood Association (BNA), the Blackland Community Development Corporation (BCDC), and a myriad of supporting characters was a fight against all odds every step of the way. A community created by segregation, systematically oppressed for decades, devalued and disregarded by a Goliathan adversary was able to rally and fight to firmly secure their neighborhood’s spatial integrity. The process was relentless; Blackland suffered losses of people and place but and stood their ground until their community was secure. As a result, Blackland stands strong and proud to this day, and their community continues to serve as an example to other communities of color who seek to protect their neighborhoods from displacement.

THE ROOTS OF STRUGGLE

The road to get there, however, was long and fraught with difficulty. Between the initial annexations in 1966 and the return of the University in the early 1980s, the University and local real estate actors continued to pursue the University East annexation plan (the formal name given to UT’s city-approved urban renewal program).

Coordinating off-book in backroom, closed-door meetings at country clubs and other exclusive establishments serving the city's business elites, speculatory real estate actors acquired property throughout the neighborhood in anticipation of the University's eventual return (McCarver, 1995, p.26, 36; Interview with Joseph Martinez, 2018). The nature of these closed space University collaborations led the City's Planning Commissioner Larry Jackson to remark "'[t]hey… cut their deals behind closed doors over cigars and whiskey" (McCarver, 1995, p.27) during a 1982 Planning Commission hearing.

The property they held was rented at very low rates, which did provide desirable affordable housing for non-white low-income families who still faced race-based exclusion in the rest of the city. This was not done out of the goodness of the owner's hearts. Speculatory landlords fully neglected to maintain these properties, allowing them to become dilapidated such that they could be reasonably condemned. With non-white tenants and conditions resembling blight The University had the necessary basis upon which they could justify their highly racialized subjugation of the area for development purposes as they did in the 60s. By the 1980s McCarver (1995) estimates that roughly half of the existing housing stock was owned by speculators and occupied by low-income families who often lived beside elder, long time homeowners.

Austin was in the midst of a growth period that would spur its ascension to its current metropolitan status, driving rapid escalation in land value throughout the city. In December of 1981 the UT's Board of Regents, sensitive to the opportunity cost of inaction, approved a new plan to annex 10 acres of the Blackland area by carving out a swath of land directly north of Blackland between 26th Street (now Dean Keaton), I-35, and Manor road (McCarver, 1995). Worse yet and unbeknownst to the Blackland folk, UT had begun a closed-door process to plan for acquiring an additional 16 acres further

south. Through employing a black real estate agent to act as proxy, the University began to acquire properties in Blackland from both speculators and local owners without coordination with City officials or area residents (p.35).

Despite having gone so far as to employ a dummy corporation to act as a front for University acquisitions, residents became aware of their strategy when a local seller disclosed UT's involvement in the sale. At the outset the southward encroachment plan was not shared with either the public or the City, and concern was growing throughout not only Blackland but nearby neighborhoods (composed of more well-to-do home owners) as to the extent of UT's ambition. Organizations representing the areas around Blackland offered some early resistance against the University, but quickly exited the game as soon as they were able to confirm their neighborhoods were not targeted for annexation (McCarver, 1995). One organization, ACORN, was able to provide the area support at the city level through pressuring the city council to maintain funding support for a community center that was planned prior to UT's renewed annexation campaign.

The process of ensuring the community center would proceed also elicited clarification from the University on their strategy for acquisitions, and University officials stated they had no intention to employ eminent domain (City Council Minutes, 1982, p.12). Instead, they assured the City Council and area residents they would only purchase properties as they came to market. Residents understood this to at least mean that no one living in Blackland would be unexpectedly displaced, as so many had been when the University came in 1966. Although many community members were intent on remaining in the neighborhood, they held no animosity towards those who chose to sell. When folks started to receive eviction notices out of the blue, the Blackland community decided they had enough:

> Their excuse, of course, is the land is cheap. And I guess that's good business sense. But one thing they promised is that they would only buy property if it came on the market. They were gonna hold to that. But… the university broke its promise of waiting until they came on the market. And when they bought a house, they were putting the people out. Two or three days after they bought the house, they'd come to the renters and say, "You gotta go". … That year, we decided: Enough is enough. You will not come east anymore (McCarver, 1995, quoting Katherine Poole).

Figure 4. 1: Katherine Poole, Charlie Smith, and Councilwoman Sally Shipman c.1985 – Source: Texas Housers, 2015

While ACORN may have helped to ensure the neighborhood's community center project would continue, they and other area neighborhood associations would sow the seeds of the Blackland Neighborhood Association (BNA) through their ineffectiveness. The Cherrywood-Concordia Neighborhood Association, for example, held a community

meeting in 1982 for the surrounding areas to discuss UT's actions. According to McCarver (1995) "[t]he event was doomed from the outset" (p.95), and led to nothing but dissonance with the communities they sought to engage.

Dissatisfaction with this and other similar experiences led Blackland residents Katherine Poole (Figure 4.1) and K.C. Cerny (an established white resident) to organize the first meeting of what was dubbed the Blackland Neighborhood Association (BNA). This time, the location was a Blackland-based church on 19th street and the meeting drew a group of "about 20" (McCarver, 1995, p.43) residents. On the night of October 21, 1982, they adopted the BNA moniker and elected Poole BNA coordinator. Poole reportedly rejected the title president, preferring the less imposing title of coordinator (McCarver, 1995). Her position of community leader was built on a foundation laid by decades of being a school teacher in the area, and over the years her relentless dedication and powerful voice would speak for the community and command the attention of all who would be subject, including the University President. When asked later by McCarver (1995) why she became leader, her response speaks to a do it yourself aesthetic that would become definitive of the Blackland community:

> I wanted to lead the group because I wanted it to continue. I was afraid that someone else would not pull through. When we decided to elect a president, I waited to see if anyone else would step forward. When no one did, I volunteered (p.43).

Her response also speaks to how the Blackland community was formed through the shared experiences of marginalization and displacement resulting from UT's annexation campaigns. It was quickly recognized that due to the tactics employed by UT's growth coalition, both renters and owners alike experienced a shared vulnerability and lack of agency against displacement. During the first meeting a consensus was formed around treating both owners and renters equitably, despite having considerably

different stakes in the conflict. While homeowners may have been more financially well-off and stood to at least gain monetarily if they were forced to sell, they shared working-class roots and a history of "humble beginnings" (McCarver, 1995, p.43) that created a sense of mutual understanding:

> "Although all were concerned with their personal fates, I was impressed with the general empathy that they expressed for the plight of all residents of the area, particularly tenants of absentee landlords who were selling to the university. This empathy was in part fueled by the realization that, with UTs eminent domain powers, homeowners could be evicted as easily as tenants" (p.43).

Early meetings were very much a learning process, as the organization had no external guidance to draw upon for either organizational or resistance strategies and were forced to learn from experience the nature of their opponent and how best to protect their neighborhood. State Representative Wilhelmina Delco, then Chair of the House Higher Education Committee, attended an early BNA meeting where she arrived late (many attendees had left already) and told residents that she had no ability to stop or influence UT or to help the neighborhood due to UT's highly influential lobbying to "'burnt-orange jacket'" (McCarver, 1995, p.44) legislators who controlled the flow of UT-related legislature. Her advice was "to find a house outside of the neighborhood and have UT buy that house for them" (p.44). Residents, understandably frustrated by Delco's utter lack of support (and tone-deaf advice), had their first encounter with the raw strength of UT's state-sanctioned development regime.

Despite the discouraging encounter, BNA members recognized that at the least they could increase communication with the area's residents through a BNA newsletter. Bo McCarver, having been unable to attend earlier meetings due to family responsibilities, was in attendance for the first time when the newsletter was proposed, and after waiting for others to volunteer with no avail he offered to take on the project.

McCarver came from a significantly different background than other white residents on the East Side, many of whom were university students and staff, but his early interactions with the Blackland community and the BNA were undertaken with an awareness of race and his positionality as an external white community member:

> I waited for someone to volunteer some method of reproducing the newsletter, which I felt was vital if the organization was to be effective. No one spoke up. Poole looked discouraged and started to take up another subject. I found myself rising to volunteer to produce a newsletter for a group of people I did not know; for an organization in which I was not sure I was welcome; and, given the frailness of the elderly who made up the majority of the group, I was very doubtful if we had enough resources to put up much of a fight. K.C. Cemy, the white resident who had invited me to the meeting, stood and seemingly vouched for my legitimacy to the group with the statement, "There you go folks - now you have a newsletter!" As the group moved onto another subject, 1 wondered what I had just gotten myself into (McCarver, 1995, p.45).

While McCarver would eventually show through his actions the significant strategic and organizational knowledge he had to contribute to Blackland's resistance, his approach to engaging the community reflected an appreciation for building trust and prioritizing the voices and perspectives of long time black community members. In his own words, McCarver (1995) "made it a point to listen respectfully and tried to never offer a bias or engage in gossip. [His] main communication style was that of listening and questioning" (p.47). McCarver would work closely with Katherine Poole, Charlie Smith, and other community leaders, employing his listening and questioning approach and no-nonsense work ethic to build trust over time. Poole would later reflect on the close-knit relationship she developed with McCarver as a result of his humility and respect:

> Then I became very close to you because there came time when I would tell you things that happened to me personally - things that I didn't tell anybody. But knowing you – you didn't talk, you didn't gossip, You could always see the good side of it. In many ways you helped me solve some of my personal problems. I had confidence in you. I still do (p.200).

It was through running the newsletter that McCarver would regularly meet with Poole, Smith, and other community members to discuss "strategies and tactics" (p.45). The newsletter itself would be one of several community-engagement strategies that would serve to form a sort of social cohesion between residents. As McCarver (1995) relates in his reflections on getting to know the Blackland community he had only recently joined, the process of forging a community network that can support collective action requires reconciling a mosaic of existing community dynamics, not all of which are friendly. Katherine Poole and another well-established resident Charles "Charlie" Smith (shown with Katherine Poole and Councilwoman Sally Shipman in Figure 4.1) were "astute of most of [the] problems" (p.46) that caused division within the community and leveraged their reputation in the neighborhood to mend fences as needed.

Growing pressure from UT, who had continued to pursue acquisitions as Blackland formed a basis for resistance, also served to catalyze community collectivization around the shared loss to be had by all neighborhood residents. This level ground established early on amongst BNA participants allowed for dialogue, and over time a process for strategic planning, group dialogue, and shared decision making was formed:

> "The frequent meetings brought neighbors together who had rarely had contact, if any, prior to the annexation. Within the organization, a core of worker/leaders formed which included myself. We constantly discussed strategies and tactics and when we reached consensus, we presented our plans to the total group, which generally accepted them after discussion. We then acted on whatever was agreed upon and reported back at subsequent meetings" (McCarver, 1995, p.48).

From these initial meetings the BNA formed 3 main arguments against UT's annexations that were disseminated in the BNA newsletter:

1. Blackland residents did not want to be displaced

2. UT's annexation campaign is racist and based on historical processes of racial disinvestment
3. The City of Austin has an affordable housing problem and UT is making it worse by destroying existing affordable housing (McCarver, 1995).

Each argument had utility depending on the audience, and residents began to be familiar with the three arguments and how best to employ them. By the fall of 1982 the BNA had not made substantial progress against UT's annexations, but they had an informed membership and if there was ever a time to act, it would be then.

The BNA launched their first of many press offensives in November 1982, when they flyered cars of football fans attending the UT/A&M game who had grown fond of the community for providing cheap, safe game-day parking in the area. The flyers were basic fact sheets information that illustrated the displacement and institutional barriers they were up against. Both student and city newspapers had begun to take interest in UT's increasingly difficult annexation activities since they began anew in 1981, so when BNA invited a handful of news outlets several came to see what they had to say (McCarver, 1995). Providing a key moment of victory early in the game, BNA's story made it to the evening news on each channel present during the event. To many BNA members, this media coverage brought a sense of validation to a struggle they were not sure they could really fight:

> Although the press event was successful in the media, it had far more impact on the morale of the neighborhood association. The television coverage was the talk of the next meeting. They buzzed with excitement and were anxious to do it again. Interestingly, they articulated certain themes from the interviews: "UT doesn't need the land" and "How can a state university dabble in land speculation?" The airing of the neighborhood's issues on television served to legitimize them to the residents. It was as if a third party had said, "Yes, you have a valid complaint" (McCarver, 1995, p.54)

Following the success of the flyering event, BNA began to employ media engagement as a main strategy for countering UT's efforts. Communications and lobbying by BNA members to the Austin City Council and other City officials in the early months of 1983 proved ineffective, as the City claimed it was not capable of forcing the State entity to obey City zoning requirements or effectively communicating with UT at all. To counter this the BNA focused on collaboration with the media, who often used filming and editing techniques to accentuate a sympathetic tone, shining a public spotlight on unethical or otherwise shady dealings between UT and development partners.

As McCarver (1995) notes, Blackland members "became 'press-wise,' and used it as their leading tool" (p.58) for countering new actions by UT. As BNA continued to grow, its organizational understanding of how to work with media and public awareness improved. A second strategy was developed to complement their media engagement strategy using public letters. Upon learning of a new UT proposal, BNA would send letters detailing the proposal and their organization's response to both city council & the press, forcing UT into the public spotlight and putting additional pressure on city officials to act. These two strategies formed what McCarver (1995) referred to as the "one-two punch" (p.145) and would continue to be relied upon by the BNA for the entirely of their 15-year fight.

Between January and April BNA employed the "one-two punch" (McCarver, 1995, p.145) as several members, including McCarver and Katherine Poole, lobbied the City Council and other City officials to curb UT's development power. These efforts culminated in the City Planning Commission holding a public hearing in late April under significant public pressure in response to UT's annexations. Turnout was nearly 100 strong when the BNA presented their public petition that had garnered more than 1,200

signatures, several of which were from elected officials, and requested the city extent their zoning authority to university land.

The meeting itself was inconclusive. The BNA was able to gain a much more effective understanding of how to engage with city officials, and which ones they could rely on for support. Moreover, the significant public support for their request and subsequent UT-critical media coverage from the *Austin American Statesman* and *Daily Texan* seemed to have some degree of effect on the City Council. Roughly 2 months later, on June 16th the Council passed an ordinance that extended city zoning authority to university properties. This ordinance would not result in an immediate cessation to UT's annexations, but it would change the rules of the game and pave the way for Blackland to compete. Acquiring residential land for future use as University support facilities involved land use processes that now fell well within the City's purview. With the June 16th ordinance requiring the University to comply with City zoning meant the University would no longer be able to act unilaterally without communicating or coordinating the City.

The BNA had been diligent in employing their affordable housing argument to put significant pressure on the City and UT as local media outlets ran stories, opinion pieces, and reader-submitted letters condemning both parties for their role in exacerbating the issue. In an attempt to alleviate pressure for both parties, the City offered to purchase seven houses on Blackland properties from the university to be removed and rehabilitated elsewhere. This offer had already been offered by the City a year before, but UT never took further action beyond saying it would be considered. This time the University was happy to accept, and both parties were ready to spin a tale of making good on affordable housing provision when the deal went public.

GETTING IN THE GAME

What was not known to either party at the time was that the Blackland community had been developing a plan of their own. Evictions that had left families literally on the curb without warning had stirred up something within the community. A spirit of resistance was being kindled by Katherine Poole and her colleagues as they searched for a way to, in Poole's words, "get enough homes over here to have our neighbors back in the neighborhood." In spring of 1983 this fledgling idea became one step closer to realization with help from Jim Piper from the Legal Aid Society of Central Texas, who presented the BNA with a legal strategy that would allow the community to challenge UT. In the words of McCarver (Knobe, 2000):

> The idea was: If you put HUD housing in this area — working as part of a federal project sponsored by the city— if you put residential housing in here and use it for low income families for public purpose, then it's really difficult for a state entity to take it over. There's a rule, a presidential order, that says that if a state entity tries to condemn one of these HUD projects, the U.S. Department of Justice will defend the federal rights. In other words, if the university tried to come in and take those properties, the Department of Justice would be representing Blackland. Not bad. (sic, p.11)

Jim Piper also introduced Poole and McCarver to John Henneberger and Karen Paup, who had developed a real knack for working through municipal mechanisms to channel Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and other Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds into low-income housing. When the BNA became aware of the forthcoming agreement between UT and the City to move houses out of Blackland for rehabilitation in June of 1983, it was Henneberger who advised the BNA to issue a public proposal to UT (also to the press, City Council) requesting that the neighborhood be allowed to manage the houses in place as low-income housing.

Offering this public proposal provided the vital counterpoint to UT's hegemony over development in Blackland: an alternative development strategy. The BNA had

already been diligent in the previous year putting forth their argument that UT was only exacerbating the City's affordable housing issue. Their proposal to manage the houses in place, would prevent displacement, maintain existing affordable housing, and cost considerably less for the City. By issuing this alternative the BNA challenged the legitimacy of the agreement for removal and rehabilitation, compromising the rationale the City and University employed to save face amidst growing controversy and providing a platform for Blackland to claim a stake in the development game.

The University responded with a hard no, saying that they had already committed to the city deal, but their refusal would have little effect. The BNA soon after wrote to both the Mayor and City Council reiterating their plan and asking for a hold on house removal so the community could form an organization to facilitate in-place management. In a City Council meeting on July 21, 1983 BNA representatives Chris McIntosh, Katherine Poole, and Bo McCarver made their case directly to the council. Facing increasing public scrutiny and left with little choice, the council voted to freeze the project until at least August 11th or until Blackland could form their organization (McCarver, 1995).

On August 4th, just a few weeks later, BNA leadership founded the Blackland Community Development Corporation. As a public-service non-profit the BCDC was obligated to remain politically neutral in order to qualify for federal funding, so the community decided to delegate political and activist strategy to the BNA while the BCDC focused on neighborhood development. Charles Smith, one of the original community organizers, became chair of the BCDC while Poole remained president of the BNA. The membership of both organizations overlapped significantly, with shared meetings wherein BNA leadership would cover political content while the BCDC reported on neighborhood development efforts. By keeping the membership together and

avoiding unnecessary administrative separation this shared meeting strategy allowed for a smooth transition from one to two primary neighborhood organizations (McCarver, 1995).

At the invitation of Henneberger and Paup, Katherine Poole and McCarver attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a project by the Guadalupe Neighborhood Development Corporation shortly after forming the BCDC. Seeing the success of a community driven neighborhood development project in person made tangible an idea that had been a dream not even a year before (McCarver, 1995). The BCDC began to formally work with Henneberger and Paup, who went to work immediately applying for CDBG funds while the BNA continued to apply pressure on the City to maintain their freeze on house removal (Knobe, 2000). On September 20th the city granted BCDC $500,000 in CDBG funds, which both formalized the BCDC as a legitimate development actor in the area and gave them leverage to maintain city support against UT aggression (McCarver, 1995).

In *less* than one year, the Blackland community went from holding their first BNA meeting with about 20 residents to having a CDC with $500,000 of Federal HUD funds distributed through the City to develop low-income housing where UT was trying to annex neighborhood land. They also had a plan for doing so, a plan built to fell a giant and save the neighborhood, presented here in the words of John Henneberger recorded in a conversation between himself, Paup, Poole, and McCarver years later:

> The university thought they could buy the land for cheap and just roll over the neighborhood. But it was becoming clear that the city was going to at least partially back the neighborhood, and we were going to compete with the university in buying property. We started building new houses strategically to stop the university from acquiring entire blocks of land — you go in the middle of a block and stick a house; you go on one corner of the block and stick a new house — and they couldn't get a big enough chunk of land to do their institutional

> redevelopment. They had to take us on. And the city was giving us the money to buy the land and build the houses. So we were fighting them on an equal level" (Knobe, 2000, p.11).

When Henneberger says that UT "had to take us on" (p.11) it was not an overstatement: because BCDC was now CDBG funded and represented a legitimate public-interest serving development entity, the city was in a precarious position of having funded BCDC but also having to deal with the University's pursuit of annexations.

At the suggestion of Assistant City Manager Frank Hersman, Councilwoman Sally Shipman (who would be a continual ally for Blackland) was able to organize a a series of meeting between BNA leaders (Smith, Poole, McCarver, Alice LeNoir), UT representatives (Jim Wilson and Martha Williams), and the city (Hersman and Paula Phillips) in order to hash out some agreement for peaceful coexistence (McCarver, 1995). The process was arduous, and UT appeared unlikely to willingly agree to any of BNA's requirements. To avoid losing ground the BNA took the Letter of Agreement that had formed over subsequent meetings and distributed it to the press and all parties involved in its crafting, ensuring that UT would not be able to make additional changes that removed BNA's provisions. This Letter of Agreement was signed (albeit grudgingly) by the City, UT, and the BNA in January of 1984.

A Changing Landscape of Conflict

When the Blackland community entered into the 1984 agreement, confidence was high that their struggle against UT would soon be resolved (McCarver, 1995). While few in the community were happy to have compromised with the University, there was cautious optimism that through the BCDC Blackland would have the opportunity to collaborate with UT and the city to develop a mixed-use pattern that allowed University and residential uses to coexist peacefully (Knobe, 2000). The University re-stated their

intent to only purchase properties as they come to market, and it was the neighborhood's assumption that this at least meant no surprise evictions or underhanded acquisition tactics to push property to market. With the introduction of the BCDC, the community had a means to take some control of development in their neighborhood and shape it in their image.

The BCDC had in fact been quite busy during this time as they began to undertake several development projects of their own. Henneberger and K. Paup were responsible for property acquisition and worked closely with Charles Smith, Poole, and McCarver in order to ensure they were working towards the best interest of the neighborhood (McCarver, 1995). The community's first development project was the rehabilitation of a rental property owned by Fannie Mae Stewart, a longtime resident who relied in its income. Starting in the winter of 1985 and completed by May of the following year, this project represented not only the BCDC's first physical presence in the neighborhood but helped to further strengthen their resolve:

> About a dozen BNA members were joined by volunteers from the Austin Tenants' Council and the Austin Habitat for Humanity through the spring weekends. The project presented a tough test for BNA's human resources. I labored on the house during weekends and some week nights, involving my family and whatever friends I could exploit for help. Others in BNA did the same. The activity extended our interactions beyond the context of the seemingly endless neighborhood meetings and strengthened our esprit de corps" (McCarver, 1995, p.86)

In August 1985 the BCDC acquired a property at 2112 Concho (Travis County Appraisal District), which was located within their immediate targeted area for annexation. This property, along with three additional properties on Chicon and E. 22nd acquired soon thereafter (Travis County Appraisal District) were sold by owners who were only willing to sell to the BCDC. As the BCDC pursued its neighborhood

development strategy, BNA members McCarver, Alice LeNoir, and Veon McReynolds had been attending monthly meetings of the Blackland Planning Committee with UT and city representatives. The BNA advocated for managing the houses on UT and city property in place as affordable housing, which the University had no interest in allowing, while the BNA was not willing to accept University-City collaboration to remove the houses.

According to McCarver (1995), "the BNA learned not to rely on the Blackland Planning Committee for any significant policy information from UT" (p.88) and the spirit of collaboration between both parties was at an all-time low when 2112 Concho was sold to the BCDC. University officials did not take kindly to the purchase and threatened to increase the pace of their acquisition if Blackland continued to threaten UT's plans. To clear the air the BCDC reached out to UT President Flawn and clarified that they had no intention of interfering with their acquisitions and proposed the idea of exchanging properties as needed. Flawn indicated interest in such an exchange and appeared satisfied with the update, so it was to some surprise the BNA learned through an assistant of Martha Williams, Dean of the UT School of Social Work at the time, that the School intended to slowly withdraw their social work internship program in Blackland. They also learned that the University had begun directly contacting Blackland owners with no direct BNA affiliation to bring property to market more efficiently (McCarver, 1995).

RENEWED CONFLICT AND A RETURN TO ARMS

In response to this growing tension between Blackland and UT resulting from the 2112 Concho purchase, City Manager Jorge Callasco attempted to block the BNA from receiving federal funding for VISTA volunteers. This issue was resolved when Councilwoman Shipman intervened to secure the funding, but UT continued to lobby city

officials to stop the BCDC's development activities and in October the city froze the CDBG funding they had been awarded the previous year until the conflict between UT and the BCDC was settled (McCarver, 1995). Frustrated with the sudden return to hostilities, the BNA decided to return to their public letter strategy with a series of letters written by Poole (with BNA member approval) to UT President Flawn's successor, William Cunningham.

Referred to as the "October Letters" (McCarver, 1995), they served as public reiterations of their perspective on affordable housing and the university's antagonistic role in manipulating owners and causing involuntary displacement. They also presented a new argument that connected UT investments in South African firms profiting from Apartheid with funding for UT's Blackland annexations, an approach supported strongly by Veon McReynolds, who had previously advocated for more aggressive use of anti-racism rhetoric. Although according to McCarver (1995) this was "the first public use of the [racism] issue" (p.92), student protests against UT investment in apartheid had made the link with development in Blackland as early as 1982.

The October Letters were circulated amongst City Council, County government officials, and press organizations. The BNA also held a press conference led by Veon McReynolds to protest city blocking of funds with residents handing out fact sheets and giving resident support statements that created a powerful contrast to UT's stark, administrative responses. The Blackland Community's vocal resistance may have to some extent aggravated city officials who supported UT's annexations, as in response to Blackland's renewed press activity the Department of Housing and Community Services stated that they would not approve any BCDC developments in areas UT intended to annex. The BNA, however, had become extremely efficient at leveraging press coverage and UT mis-steps to put significant pressure on both the city and the University:

> We made a lot of press every time we did something. We were always mindful of keeping our paws in the paper and on television. What I tried to do was get key players over here who would come out real authentic on the 6 o'clock news. Real people who maybe stammered and stuttered a little when they talked and weren't all that articulate. And the juxtaposition against them was G. Charles Franklin, the vice-president for business affairs at the university. The man speaks like an undertaker. He makes statements like: "A prudent person knows, when he buys a property near a large institution, there's a possibility that his property will be annexed." Now, we had him with people here who were blind and widowed. And they're saying: "I don't know what I'm gonna do if the university keeps coming eastward." It got to be pretty hard to make a case for the university (Knobe, 2000, p.15)

UT continued their land acquisitions but began to draw to draw heavy media criticism for "poor race relations" (McCarver, 1995, p.111), unethical annexation practices, and for exacerbating the city's affordable housing issue. When UT made an acquisition west of I-35 in May of 1986, media outlets were quick to raise the question of why UT needed land in East Austin and if they had a defined intention for the land they were acquiring. On February 25, 1986 G. Charles Franklin stated the University "will eventually use the land for maintenance-type facilities" (McCarver, 1995, p.109), which is consistent with their general expansion plan to accommodate research growth (Tretter, 2012) but otherwise appears poorly articulated, more speculatory than strategic.

There was, however, a defined need for affordable housing at the City level, which the BNA had effectively embedded into their public outreach platform that had been in use for several years by this time. This put the BCDC in a much stronger position as a public development entity, as they had a defined use, the capacity to pursue that use effectively, and a city-level recognition of the public good-justification for a public entity to do so. With a certain level of established credibility in affordable housing development, the BNA was now in an even stronger position to challenge the city and University on affordable housing grounds.

UT purchased several parcels on Comal, which had recently become “vacant” when the owner served eviction notices to all tenants ahead of UT’s purchase (McCarver, 1995), allowing UT to maintain a thinly veiled facade of only acquiring vacant property. The BNA responded immediately by holding a press conference that drew city wide coverage, while at the same time sending a request to UT that the neighborhood be allowed to manage the cottages themselves. Shortly after this a protest of the University’s planned demolition was organized by UT School of Social work interns that drew a crowd of about 50 people, including trusted city ally Councilwoman Shipman. The Comal Cottage protests resulted in the termination of the social work program in Blackland, consistent with earlier intentions from Dean Martha Williams to slowly withdraw from the area. When the BNA continued to protest the demolition or removal of their neighborhood housing after the 1984 Agreement, UT (and City allies) rebuked Blackland for acting out of turn. When the community came to consider UT’s policies at this time as “‘placate and destroy’” (McCarver, 1995, p.83) they were not off base.

The Comal protests also provided significant fuel for a media fire the BNA had lit under both the city and UT. The University continued along with their annexations, acquiring an additional block of property that displaced the tenants of nine housing units. The city, however, was less tolerant of media and public criticism, in part due to electoral vulnerability, and were not as keen to continue blocking BCDC development plans. With the help of Councilwoman Shipman, the BCDC was able to secure a significant victory in the leasing of multiple unoccupied city lots by the neighborhood center.

Meanwhile, a select group of BNA representatives led by Katherine Poole appeared at a Council Housing Subcommittee meeting in October of 1986 to request the release of CDBG funding in order to proceed with their housing plans. With technical assistance from John Henneberger, support from Councilwoman Shipman, and the

unwavering leadership of Katherine Poole, the subcommittee agreed to release $40,000 for immediate use and set a path for releasing the rest. They broke ground on what would become 11 affordable and elderly housing next to the Blackland Neighborhood Center before the end of October (McCarver, 1995).

A New Level of Confidence and Power

The work of the BCDC in rehabilitating neighborhood housing provided a morale boost for the community and organization members that had been fighting UT's annexations for several years. Having a physical development presence also gave the neighborhood a significantly more powerful position from which to contest UT. Now the task at hand became getting ahead of UT in order to secure a permanent solution. One of the most valuable political actions employed by the BNA was campaigning for the reelection of Councilwoman Shipman. Shipman had shown true dedication through her ardent support of Blackland's cause, and ensuring her reelection was necessary to maintain council support amongst a time of heavy University lobbying. The passionate campaigning by BNA leaders and volunteers were highly valuable to that cause, and further displayed the neighborhood's ability to advocate effectively for their local allies. The BNA also lobbied at state level to strip the University of its power of eminent domain and was able to convince Senator Barrientos, a local representative, to sponsor a bill to do so. Due to lack of commitment from Senator Delco, who had a history of poor relations with the community, the bill did not get very far. Nevertheless, the BNA's visible and vocal challenge to UT at the state level left University officials with deep discomfort. (McCarver, 1995, p.115).

On October 17th, 1987, one year after the subcommittee victory that released CDBG funding, the BCDC and BNA held a housewarming for 11 units, including six

cottages that together were named “Robert Shaw Village” (McCarver, 1995, p.118). That same fall BNA president Veon McReynolds and John Henneberger gained new allies in SPAC and A Luta Continua (student group) through McReynolds. An alignment in causes of affordable housing (SPAC) and resisting the exploitation of communities of color (A Luta Continua) fostered natural alliance with Blackland, and these partnerships further bolstered community spirit. As Blackland drew support from new allies, the community was also in communication with a new University representative sent to engage the community and facilitate new dialogues. Lewis Wright, the UT representative, was able to convene a meeting between Blackland and University representatives in May of 1988. The meeting did not go well for UT:

> The event constituted the public hearing UT had formerly tried to avoid. Wright presented two proposals to residents: a property exchange and a purchase relocation. None of the 20 residents expressed any interest in either option. They immediately began to bombast the three men for trying to destroy the neighborhood. Many residents took the opportunity to vent their pent-up anger at UTs policies.
>
> This solid front on the part of Blackland residents was not anticipated by the three UT representatives or Delco, who had apparently been invited to the meeting by UT (McCarver, 1995, p.118).

The University continued to work with city officials to pursue removal of housing on Blackland properties (p.120), while the BNA requested again that they be able to manage houses in place after inspections by John Henneberger revealed they were viable for rehabilitation (p.121). UT refused to capitulate. With 26 houses sitting vacant on University land with no clear plan for use, the BNA was presented with the opportunity to work with the SPAC to enact one of their most dramatic acts of protest to date:

> VEON MCREYNOLDS: I was working for the neighborhood back then, and there was this national campaign called ‘Take the Boards Off Day.’ The idea was that there were lots of vacant boarded up places that were publicly owned and we should make those places available to homeless people. Rather than sleeping

> outside, people could at least go inside and sleep. Anyway, the university owned these little cottages in Blackland. Really nice little single units. It was almost like a motel. So we decided to take over those units (Knope, 2000, p.12).

The intent to occupy UT housing in Blackland was presented to the media by the "'June 14th Committee"' (McCarver, 1995, p.121), which included members of SPAC and other homeless organizations, a few days prior to the protest date (July 14th, the committee's namesake). As planned, activists gathered in Blackland on July 14th, 1988, joined by members of Blackland organizations, local homeless, and a Goose named Homer (who had become a symbol city wide of homeless protests):

> JOHN HENNEBERGER: So it's 'Take the Boards Off Day.' The homeless people and the neighbors march from one corner of the neighborhood to the other, with Homer leading the march. The university owned this old tourist court, and it was all boarded it up. So they break in. …
>
> It was alright until someone else in the administration read the newspaper early in the morning. They called in SWAT team; they called in 30 people in SWAT outfits to surround this little parade and Homer and the three homeless men who camped out there for the night and carted them off to jail and put Homer in jail over at the SPCA (Knope, 2000, p.14).

The press and public fallout were, as one can imagine, quite severe. UT was once again feeling the heat due from sharp criticism in their role in exacerbating homelessness and displacement in the city, while Blackland's primary argument based on affordable housing was front and center in public discourse city-wide. The University, deeply frustrated by these community resistance efforts, sought to solve eliminate their problem ripping it out by the roots (Knope, 2000). When contractors arrived to demolish the 26 homes the University once again underestimated the BNA's capacity to capitalize on UT's aggressions to generate new pressure from the press and general public:

> KATHERINE POOL: One day I was walking, and I saw these big trucks. I didn't know what they were, but I asked the guy who was walking with me, "What are those things?" and he said: "Those are bulldozers." I said: "Uh-Oh." And I thought: "Let's get some homeless people in these houses. It will look bad for

> homeless people to be in these houses and they bulldoze them." I knew Laurie Renteria, and I called her and asked her if she could get some homeless people over here. And when she brought them over here, they were very intelligent and didn't mind speaking to the television and to the newspapers. And being as intelligent as they were, they made very good speeches. They told the public about how the university was bulldozing houses that homeless people could live in and would be happy to have (Knope, 2000, p.15)

THE ENDGAME

The response from Blackland to UT's demolishing of affordable housing pressured the University to compromise. As the events around the July 14th protest unfolded, the BNA had been hard at work devising a proposal for peaceful coexistence between the Blackland community and the University. According to McCarver (1995) BNA leadership was in response to a University proposal published in the Austin American Statesman where the University would purchase property and allow the occupants to remain temporarily while they flesh out a plan for their acquisitions. Lewis Wright, the University's community liaison, arranged a second meeting between Blackland and University leaders where the BNA presented the 50-50 split proposal wherein UT would agree to limit their property ownership to the west of Leona Street, give up their power of eminent domain, and move any housing on their remaining property east into Blackland to help the neighborhood recover some of its lost housing stock (Knope, 2000; McCarver, 1995).

While UT did not immediately respond to the proposal, the BNA and their allies applied significant political pressure through public advocacy and lobbying both city and state level officials to support the 50/50 proposal (McCarver, 1995). The BNA re-engaged in grassroots campaigning against Senator Delco and exerted sufficient pressure to acquire her written endorsement for the proposal and secured the support of Senator Barrientos as well. The SPAC and La Luta Continua held daily protests on the UT

campus, generating continuous student media coverage, while Poole and McCarver secured support from the local NAACP chapter. With the opportunity ripe for the taking, the BNA wrote a public letter to Cunningham on November 10, 1988, formally offering the 50/50 proposal as a road towards permanent ended the prolonged conflict (McCarver, 1995).

When Cunningham received a letter from State Governor Ann Richards on December 19th, 1988 requesting that he take Blackland's proposal seriously, it would be just three days until he invited Blackland leaders to meet in person and formally "accepted the general provisions of the 50-50 Proposal" (p.133). Acceptance by the Blackland community was also key, and though there was general consensus that the Proposal presented the best long-term solution they had to offer, not all were content with the concessions made to UT and many still harbored doubts about the University's trustworthiness in the face of several decades of betrayals and damages. The final words belonged to Katherine Poole, who vouched for the University's earnest commitment and with the weight of her community reputation was able to alleviate her neighbor's concerns (p.134).

It would not be until February 1991 that UT and Blackland would complete negotiations of the property exchanges and housing relocations required to satisfy the 50/50 agreement (McCarver, 1995), and several years more until Blackland would gain permanent control of these properties (Knope, 2000). By the beginning of 1989, however, the BNA, BCDC, Blackland residents, and their allies not only put a permanent end to the threat of displacement but further established the community as driver of the area's future. The Blackland community and their relentlessly hard-working leaders like Katherine Poole, Bo McCarver, Veon McReynolds, and Alice LeNoir stood against a

giant and showed exactly what a community of color has the capacity to do. To give the last word once again to Katherine Poole:

> KATHERINE POOL: In the beginning, UT wanted 16 blocks. Well, they were able to get 8 blocks, and the neighborhood kept the other 8. My street sort of divided the 16 blocks, so they stopped the encroachment at my street. And then eventually — I believe it was in ’97 — the properties that they had bought east of my street which is where they stopped, they deeded us those properties. They gave them to us (Knope, 2000, p.16).

Chapter 5: Analyzing the Blackland Resistance Saga

A Miracle on 19th Street

For the better part of a decade the Blackland community engaged in a sprawling conflict against UT that spanned from the neighborhood to the state level. In forming the BNA and creating a platform for community activation the Blackland rallied behind their leaders like Katherine Poole, Charlie Smith, and Bo McCarver to resist UT displacement by shining a public spotlight on the University's annexation tactics and the city's complicity in such schemes. By attacking the University and City on affordable housing grounds the BNA was able to compromise the ability of city actors to support University development in the east side and cast doubt on the legitimacy of the University's development authority.

In doing so they also created the opportunity to assert their own community driven plan for neighborhood development through the BCDC. As a public entity intending to furnish a public good (affordable housing) that the city was struggling to effectively provide, their alternative development strategy drastically changed the game as the community could now challenge UT on their own ground. As the BCDC pursued property acquisition and development the BNA remained steadfast in resisting the efforts of University and City officials to undermine the legitimacy of their efforts through relentless press offensives, lobbying at both the city and state level, and engaging new community allies to amplify their platform for neighborhood control.

To go toe to toe with a foe like the University was a Herculean challenge, and the sheer scale of Blackland's adversary makes their case exceptional broadly and in its local context. Blackland may not have been the first east side community to resist displacement, and in fact they benefited greatly from the experiences of other east side

resistance efforts that Henneberger and other external allies brought to the table. What makes the Blackland saga exceptional is who they took on: the University, and the State by extension. In doing so the community took east side resistance to a new level:

> Blackland asserted power against an institutional force that, you know that's a David and Goliath sort of thing. You don't get much bigger in this town. ...This was the assertion of a type of neighborhood power that had not been seen before in minority neighborhoods (Interview, 2018).

In this chapter I present an analysis of the Blackland saga aimed at providing a more structured understanding of how the Blackland community resisted such Goliathan development pressure to forge a self-determined future of their own. To do so I employ an analytical framework informed by community capacity and critical development theory that articulates the power dynamics within which the community engaged in resistance and the forms of community capacities they employed to do so. Interviews with key actors who were involved in Blackland and east side resistance will be used to more precisely identify forms of community capacity that had the most significant influence on fostering successful resistance efforts. The chapter then concludes with a discussion of sustaining resistance in Blackland over time, how their efforts could inform contemporary community resistance efforts, and the broader implications for understanding how communities effectively resist displacement.

Critical development theories have noted a process of continual adaption by communities and the dynamics of power against which they resist, whether they be embodied in institutional actors or more systemic manifestations. In order to begin the unraveling of how this give and take played out in Blackland I look to two theories in order to analyze the interplay between community resistance and the external power dynamics against which they resist. The first, Gaventa's power cube, provides a framework for articulating how power is exercised in terms of form, level, and space.

Forms allows for an articulation of the different ways institutional actors exercise power over marginalized communities, such as through public governmental processes (visible) or maintaining racialized patterns of economic development and land use (invisible). Power resides at different levels of authority, and the scale of power a given community resists against will vary by the institutions or actors they oppose. There is also a range of spaces within which power is maintained and challenged, from the closed spaces that are inaccessible to public input to the spaces created by communities to challenge external institutions. More detailed descriptions are presented in Table 5.1.

Forms	
Visible power:	observable decision making
Hidden power:	setting the political agenda
Invisible power:	shaping meaning and what is acceptable
Spaces	
Closed spaces	decisions are made by a set of actors behind closed doors, without any pretence of broadening the boundaries for inclusion
Invited spaces	those into which people (as users, citizens or beneficiaries) are invited to participate by various kinds of authorities
Claimed/created spaces	spaces which are claimed by less powerful actors from or against the power holders, or created more autonomously by them
Levels	Global - National - State - City - Neighborhood

Table 5. 1 – Source: Gaventa, 2006

A framework of community capacity is employed to help us better understand to the community dynamics and perspectives – how do they draw capacity from within the community to collectivize to the size necessary (both organizationally and in terms of (wo)man power) for mounting an effective resistance effort. Social Agency, one of the primary dimensions of community according to Chaskin (2000), refers to the human, social, and organizational capital through which community capacity is developed and employed. These forms of capital will be synthesized with capital forms associated with

Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2006) to target specific forms of social agency embedded in the shared histories of communities of color in order to specify how those communities resist. Specific forms of CCW capital related to the Blackland saga include:

> 1. **Social capital** can be understood as networks of people and community resources. These peer and other social contacts can provide both instrumental and emotional support to navigate through society's institutions.
>
> 2. **Navigational capital** refers to skills of maneuvering through social institutions. Historically, this infers the ability to maneuver through institutions not created with Communities of Color in mind.
>
> 3. **Resistant capital** refers those knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality (Freire, 1970, 1973; Giroux, 1983; McLaren, 1994; Delgado Bernal, 1997; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). This form of cultural wealth is grounded in the legacy of resistance to subordination exhibited by Communities of Color (Deloria, 1969). Furthermore, maintaining and passing on the multiple dimensions of community cultural wealth is also part of the knowledge base of resistant capital. (Yosso, 2006, p.79-80, emphasis added).

POWER DYNAMICS IN THE BLACKLAND SAGA

The university and city manifested different forms of throughout the conflict, and the way this power was employed by these institutions was forced to change as Blackland became more effective at creating spaces of participation from which the community could challenging The University. The University and City both entered the conflict with deep roots in all forms of power to be exercised, be they visible, hidden, or outright invisible. From the beginning of the conflict the 'hidden' power, or the power to "share meaning and what is acceptable" (Galenta, 2006, p.29), shaped the power dynamics against which Blackland resisted. Shaped by both the City and the University, this hidden power is most evident in the forming and perpetuating of a white supremacist racial hierarchy that over time created a deeply embedded pattern of east side segregation that

was also encoded with intentions to utilize the east side for white-centric development purposes as needed in perpetuity. Black communities and other communities of color were forcibly displaced to land on the east side that was never intended to remain in community hands. The communities were considered placeholders, disempowered and disinvested to ensure that endogenous development in the east would not be able to prevent economic development use in the future.

By nearly every account (McCarver, 1995; Knobe, 2000; Interviews, 2018) the University (and most folk when they began annexations) fundamentally could not have understood the notion that the community they intended to annex would do anything other than "roll over." While other east side communities had engaged in successful resistance to development driven displacement before Blackland, such as the Guadalupe neighborhood, none had faced the magnitude of historically entrenched institutional strength of the University acting on the longstanding land use pattern of east side subjugation. This was the deep undercurrent of invisible power wielded by the University and City that Blackland had to contest. Such an undercurrent of power does not simply write the rules of the game but further determines the entire rationale behind how the game is played and who gets to play it.

At the time of the Blackland conflict white economic development actors, to which the University and City were a party, had long-ago constructed the notion that the east side was rightfully subject to the interests of the white institutions that drove the city's decision-making processes. Even after forming the BCDC and beginning to engage in community development Karen Paup recalls a call she received from a resident that exemplifies just how pervasive this hidden power proved to be:

> Once we got the funding, and we got some houses, and we had them under contract - a person in the neighborhood told me "They'll never let you build. It'll

> never happen." Because it was like the University and the city are all one, they have one agenda, and the University will block construction because they don't want it. And the city will just go right along (Interview, 2018).

This was less of a challenge to how capable Paup, Henneberger, or the BCDC was, but rather a testament to how embedded the racialized status-quo had become.

Challenging this power was a long-term effort of the community's political resistance efforts through the BNA, which articulated a race-centric argument as one of their three central arguments that residents and members were trained to employ in public forums. The difficulty of addressing such entrenched 'invisible' forms of power is illustrated by the BNA leadership's early reluctance to push the race argument, preferring to focus on what was, at the time, the more politically salient argument based on affordable housing. Ultimately, however, Blackland would be successful in challenging even the racial hierarchy of Austin's history of segregation. By aligning with advocacy organizations protesting UT's investments in South African Apartheid the BNA was able to establish a globalized link to the University's racialized eastern expansions and challenge UT's complicity in maintain structures of white supremacy and the subjugation of communities of color.

While both the city and University enjoyed the assumption of rightness provided by patterns of hidden power that legitimized segregatory patterns of economic development, the power held by each institution begins to diverge in strength as one shifts their attention to the visible and hidden forms such power may take. Visible power, manifesting in "observable decision making" (Gaventa, 2006, p.29), and hidden power, embodied in processes for "setting the political agenda" (p.29), are both more tangible and more vulnerable targets for political action or resistance. How to challenge these forms of power, however, is shaped by what level of power each institution resides upon. For the University, decision making processes related to the annexation campaign rested

largely in the Board of Regents, a group of 9 members appointed by the State (Governor, with Senate approval), which had already secured implicit support from the State through its unilateral power to exercise eminent domain unilaterally.

It was in fact the challenge to UT's development regime legitimacy at the state level, including the lobbying and subsequent support gained by State Gov. Ann Richards, that caused UT to retreat. Prior to Gov Richard's intervention UT officials had appeared notably more rattled than by previous resistance in political arena's following the BNA's strong showing in state election seasons in the late 80's. The city, broadly speaking, was easier to challenge even in arenas of visible power because of their electoral vulnerability and broader scope of public responsibilities. Whereas UT could only be criticized for worsening affordable housing conditions in the city, the City administration could be taken to task for failing to address a city-level issue for which they are responsible.

Early efforts by the city and the University to mitigate community resistance or attempts to gain a presence in the invited spaces that *were* available (Council public hearings, Council meetings) reflects the hidden and visible extensions of this pervasive racial hierarchy. Rather than challenge the validity of UT's claims to Blackland, the city initially sought only to verify fair compensation to homeowners and otherwise claimed they had no ability to influence UT's decisions. The University meanwhile rejected any notion that they should reconsider or change their course of action, assuring the public that this was for the good of the city. The City's visible power was initially structured by the political agenda set through UT's exercise of hidden power, and many city officials were keen to maintain this power dynamic. To a certain extent the City had limited visible power where UT's development efforts were concerned, as City officials did not have the administrative jurisdiction to influence UT's development processes until City

Council passed the June, 1983 ordinance requiring the University to comply with City zoning.

The passing of this ordinance gave the City greater visible power, since they now could more effectively influence the University's development processes through regulation. The City's political agenda may have been heavily influenced by the hidden power possessed by UT and other economic development elites, but the council was beholden to an electorate that was easier to influence than the state level officials that had authority over UT's administration. While hidden power dynamics may have allowed for City actors to maintain a political agenda supporting UT, many of the spaces within which the City exercised their visible power were open to community participation by nature of their democratic design. Though at the outset of the conflict the balance of visible and hidden power in City decision making processes may not have been in Blackland's favor, these invited spaces presented the opportunity for challenge to the City's power over economic development processes.

In conflicts where deep-seated inequity and discrimination structure the dynamics of oppression and resistance it is vital to effectively challenge these forms of hidden power, but according to Gaventa (2006) the most impactful changes in power dynamics occur "in those rare moments when social movements or social actors are able to work effectively across each of the dimensions simultaneously" (p.30) Early efforts to influence city decision making through existing invited space initially proved frustrating and unproductive. While there may have been visible and invited spaces of power through which the neighborhood could engage in formal political processes, they were still doing so under the influence of a political agenda firmly decided by UT and the City. In order to more effectively counter UT Blackland had to develop the means to challenge the hidden power of the University by shifting the political agenda away from fair

compensation to the neighborhood's right to remain in place. The neighborhood began to create participatory space of their own through engaging the media and other public outlets (community organization meetings, public forums, etc.) that simultaneously chipped away at the University's power but also served to raise their profile, providing further leverage to engage UT and the City more effectively.

COMMUNITY CAPACITY IN BLACKLAND'S RESISTANCE

Understanding better the power dynamics within which Blackland contested UT's annexation regime helps to put structure to the more abstract notions of power and resistance. With this structure in place we turn to the crux of the issue - how the Blackland community drew from their capacities within to resist the extraordinary displacement pressures from without. Looking into the mechanics of community capacity, this section employs a community capacity lens that focuses on social agency, or the human, social, and organizational capital that form the vehicle for developing and exercising community capacity in resistance. Within these three forms of capital there is a diverse array of ways they may manifest. This analysis will highlight specific forms of capital inherent in communities of color based on Yosso's articulation of community cultural wealth (CCW), exploring how they manifest in human, social, and organizational forms. Guidance on which forms of capital were most instrumental in the Blackland resistance saga is drawn from select interviews with key informants closely tied to the Blackland community and their history.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL CAPITAL: THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE US WHOLE AND THE TIES THAT BIND US

Leadership in Blackland was not about power, it was about heart. In the words of Karen Paup these individuals, such as Katherine Poole and Charlie Smith (original presidents of the BNA and BCDC respectively), were "invisible leaders" who relied more on navigational, social, and resistant capital than in more professionally-based leadership skills. It is difficult to specify exactly what drove Poole and Smith towards leading the organizing a neighborhood resistance. What is certain from both McCarver and the Joseph Martinez interview is that when large numbers of families were simultaneously evicted, they decided they had had enough. Somewhere within both future community leaders there was a will to resist, some formative resistant capital that paired with their shared navigational capital kindle the flames of resistance.

Both Poole and Smith had significant navigational capital they gained through working in regular contact with white folk. Leveraging their familiarity with white institutions and social interactions, they made natural leaders when the community was required to interact with a daunting white institution like the University. At the time of the Blackland saga this experience was still somewhat rare, as John Henneberger described:

> And they were both very comfortable in making and dealing with white folks, which at the time - in East Austin, culturally and politically and race related - the place was much more insulated. ...Charlie worked for a fraternity for a while as sort of a cook and other things, and he was very comfortable. And Katherine, because [of] working for the schools was very comfortable with interracial dynamics and stuff like that. So I think a lot of people in Blackland sort of looked to them as - if you had to deal with a white institution like the University of Texas or the government in general, the two of them were seen as natural leaders because they were crossing the line, the color line (Interview, 2018).

Poole's work as a schoolteacher also left her with significant social capital through connections she made with multiple generations of area residents on the east side. For many families who had long standing residence in Blackland, Katherine Poole taught not only the children but their parents as well and was a peer of their grandparents. Firm but fair, Katherine had earned significant respect from her community and from the east side more broadly, wherein she was very much a *visible* leader. Henneberger noted specifically Poole's ability to activate community members personally:

> One of Katherine's strengths was that she could get on the phone and talk to people and get them to come to a meeting. And it seems easy, but it's much harder than it seems. People have their own schedules, and to shake them loose of their schedule to come do something that's maybe controversial, maybe a little out of the ordinary, it's hard (Interview, 2018).

Poole was also no stranger to political resistance. Karen Paup related one anecdote (presented here in full as there are too few accounts of Ms. Poole's contributions) about a moment of dissent from her fellow educators that left her snubbed, but also laid a foundation of resistant capital that would be used to settle an internal dispute with more conservative neighbors during the Blackland saga:

> Karen Paup: Well she had challenged them before. She, like a lot of teachers was a member of the democratic party. There was a candidate that they were supposed to support, and she didn't think he was the right person. So she voted against him, and the next semester she lost her classroom. She was sent off to the back of the campus where the portable buildings were, and she had had a nice classroom inside the building, so she took that as kind of "that's my punishment for defying their political position." And she did that, and she lived with it, and she had that experience so when that same group of people, some of them lived on the eastern edge of the neighborhood, had a different opinion she was ready (Interview, 2018).

Poole's social connections, navigational experience, and unbending will to resist were instrumental to the Blackland saga, epitomized by her having the last word on the neighborhood's acceptance of the 50/50 deal with UT that would (eventually) end the

nearly decade long conflict. Despite heavy reluctance by many community members, including some in BNA/BCDC leadership positions, Katherine Poole endorsed the sincerity of UT officials in entering the 50/50 deal and the community offered their support in return.

Residents and leaders like Poole and Smith formed the cornerstones of the neighborhood social network that provided continual support, guidance, and unity even as new and, at times more externally-originated, resistance leaders emerged. Newer, white residents or allies with significant human capital like Bo McCarver and John Henneberger were also able be resistance leaders, but it was incumbent upon these externally-originating actors to show due respect to the community-derived leadership and allow for decision making to ultimately rest in the existing community. Henneberger relates, for example, the deep respect Bo McCarver held and reflected in his actions as a leader in the community's resistance:

> ... Bo was such an essential force in thinking through strategy, and other things like that - but Katherine held him in check, you know in terms of making sure, and Bo was very respectful of Katherine (Interview, 2019).

McCarver and Henneberger were indeed each invaluable to Blackland resistance by bringing key human capital that informed the way the BNA and BCDC operated. Though McCarver did not derive his resistance capital from the same experiences of the Blackland community, it was no less relevant for the neighborhood. His role in shaping the BNA's political strategies was critical, including the crafting of an argument against the racism of UT's annexations that would later be heralded by Veon McReynolds (who succeeded Poole as president of the BNA) and used to rally other organizations protesting global racial injustice by UT. The one-two punch (to be discussed further shortly) and most other political offensives were all to some extent influenced by McCarver's capital.

Henneberger was likewise vital in assisting Blackland to form a community development organization and in navigating government and private channels for funding and property acquisition. The skills and knowledge they brought to the table were entirely complementary to the capital already held within the neighborhood, but they ultimately relied on existing local leaders like Poole to effectively engage and build capacity in the community.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPITAL & THE VEHICLES FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

Social capital wielded by local community leaders united and activated the community and formed the basis for more structured resistance against UT at an organizational level. The BNA, representing the political arm of the neighborhood, flourished under local leaders Poole and McReynolds with substantial strategic input from McCarver. The organization served to create space for participation wherein the community could rally together, engage in democratic decision making, and help to build community capacity through empowering members with strategic (human) capital. Training BNA members in the organization's three primary arguments and how to employ them effectively in different contexts spread the navigational and resistant capital brought by individual leaders to a collective, organizational level. As members independently brought these arguments to city meetings, public forums, and other invited or created spaces, the BNA leveraged the capital of its leaders for other advocacy methods like public letters and prepared city council presentations by key leaders with strong navigational capital.

BNA's primary strategy for challenging UT's ability to employ hidden power in closed spaces was designed by McCarver, with letters written by Katherine Poole and media coverage that utilized the resident's linguistic capital of storytelling, oration, and

real talk to present organic, relatable narratives that challenged the legitimacy of UT's justifications. The BNA levied their resistant capital against the city by employing an affordable housing argument that, by exposing the conflict of city public interests, stymied the city's visible power to help facilitate UT annexations. This also helped to create space for participation in deciding the future use of Blackland's land, and through the BCDC they could pursue that future directly.

The BCDC created space for participation in the development arena, and by acquiring property and funding they were able to leverage their capital to fundamentally change the hidden power dynamics by providing a valid alternative use that changed the political agenda the city had to manage. In Henneberger's words (from Knobe, 2000), "it was becoming clear that the city was going to at least partially back the neighborhood, and we were going to compete with the university in buying property" (p.11). In other words, the BCDC had achieved the organizational capacity to engage in the development game. Affordable housing was an issue the city was visibly struggling to deal with, and through providing an alternative community-led solution they challenged the assumption of UT's previously uncontested right to annex Blackland property.

The impact of this organizational capacity to engage in community development was the change in power dynamics the neighborhood required to forge a sustainable solution. While protest and advocacy through the BNA and individual efforts was effective in compromising the integrity of the University's power in various forms, the key to long term neighborhood control rested in the community being able to offer an alternative plan for the neighborhood. The BCDC provided the means to provide this alternative plan, and while it was informed significantly by the human capital of Henneberger, this organizational capital continues to provide the neighborhood agency over development in their area. In the words of Henneberger himself:

> I think the lesson that I would take away is that you can't beat either a large institution or a diffuse economic hoard of investors with just protest. ... There needs to be a strategy that seeks to proactively acquire, hold property and have a vision for how the property is used, and what you do then is you put pressure on the city and the state to make the financial resources available - the housing bonds are a great example - and then you've gotta shape what you're gonna do with those resources (Interview, 2018).

In the same interview Henneberger continued to discuss the role the BCDC played in not only forging the community's sustained presence but in fostering the community cohesion and capacities that fueled the BCDC and BNA:

> My point is that the corporation itself can be a creator of community in just its function, which is underappreciated I think. I mean we've seen that repeatedly the strength of relationships of board members in these CDCs and the like. But it doesn't occur - it's tricky, we can tell you places where it's gone awry. So a CDC isn't simply a development thing, it's also a thing that keeps people tied to the neighborhood (Interview, 2018)

There is no doubt the work of the BCDC generated significant community morale and enthusiasm for the fight. As detailed in Chapter 4, early development accomplishments by the BCDC were vital in invigorating the communal spirit of resistance, providing physical validation to their efforts. Continuing to hold true to the original motivation to organize and engage in development and to bring lost homes and neighbors back to Blackland, the BCDCs community development efforts were literally putting the community back together again. With each new project completed the neighborhood gained not only greater legitimacy as a development actor but another monument to their tenacity and self-determination. The housing portfolio of BCDC, which as of 2015 had grown to 48 homes (Texas Housers, 2015), continues to stand today as vested organizational capital and the BCDC itself remains a vital lifeline for the community.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Discussion: Implications and Reflections on the Future of Community Resistance & Blackland

Figure 6.1: Photo of the Fannie Mae Stewart Community Conservatory, where the BCDC continues to operate and serve their community, taken during an interview visit in 2019.

The housing managed by the BCDC today, which provides affordability to 131 residents (either transitional housing, elderly, or affordable at 50-60% MFI), are designed to visibly display the neighborhood's legacy and community character. Each of their 48 homes are numbered with bones - that is to say, dominoes (see figure 6.1) - and each bears a public marker or informational post that shares the neighborhood's history and declares the area's 'community and affordability first' attitude. As the east side today

experiences development pressure from a more diffuse and smaller scale private actors, the BCDC (which has become the primary vehicle for community action) continues to adapt to the shifting dynamics and design new ways to shape how the area changes. As Karen Paup describes:

> [I]t's incredible the amount of change that's taking place. he University coming over is one thing, but… mid-rises, ...semi-luxury apts, and condos is another thing -but Blackland has stayed in the mix and negotiated or put things in the zoning code for the neighborhood (Interview, 2018).

Under the leadership of McCarver the BCDC participated in producing the Upper Boggy Creek Neighborhood Plan and other strategies for extracting affordable units from private development, and these strategies have allowed Blackland's stock to continue growing even as the presence of private development continues to proliferate on the east side. According to Texas Housers, the current organization of Henneberger and Paup, as of 2015 the BCDC had property on 15 out of 23 blocks in their neighborhood. The current BCDC president (and longtime east side community leader) Joseph Martinez, who took over for McCarver in 2018, did not fully disclose his plans for the future when we spoke, but it was made clear that Blackland will continue to seek the greatest level of neighborhood control possible in the rapidly changing development dynamics of the east side today.

In the meantime, the BCDC and its place of residence in Fannie Mae Stewart Conservatory on East 22nd Street continues to be a source of communal connectivity and neighborhood cultural vibrancy. The conservatory is host to upwards of 200 or more community events a year (Texas Housers, 2015) and provides a central anchor point for community and neighborly relationships to continue growing. When discussing his experiences coming into his new position in Blackland, even veteran community leader Joseph Martinez found this continual conduit of communal cohesion remarkable:

> Blackland does an outstanding job though about connecting with its tenants. This… home was built to provide a community center… . This one is open pretty much all the time. When I came to work here… I was thrilled at how this place is a meeting place for people in the neighborhood. We've got 2 church groups,.... a Spanish class that has class here, we have an art class for kids, you just never know who's gonna walk in the door to come in and get water. I mean we advertise; everyone knows we have drinking water. So we just have people coming in here who want to sit and chat (Interview, 2018).

THE TAKEAWAYS

The experiences of the Blackland community present several salient takeaways that may be relevant to future community resistance efforts. First, the creation of a community driven development strategy that could serve as an alternative to UT's development agenda was vital for sustaining the type of long-term neighborhood control that resistance alone could not provide. Second, resistance in Blackland relied heavily on capital derived from within the community and the Blackland saga is part of a broader continuum of community resistance in the east side, exemplifying the value of the knowledge and skills that rest in community hands. Finally, there are lessons to be learned from the external or non-community actors who worked with the Blackland community in how planners and other potential community allies can more equitably engage with communities of color.

In Blackland, political resistance through the BNA was critical for slowing the University's momentum and creating space for participation, but without offering their own alternative development strategy the University would likely have succeeded in taking significantly more land. Employing a community development strategy through the BCDC allowed the community to challenge UT's vision for the area with a vision of their own, which was critical for establishing long term sustained resistance. The CDC is not the solution to every community problem, but as employed in Blackland it represents

a worthy example of how a community organization can leverage its capital and the capital of its residents to foster community cohesion and agency in the community's development.

Given that historically segregated and disinvested urban communities nationally are experiencing renewed economic development attention that threatens to displace lower income residents, there is a need to understand what forms of community resistance are most effective in preventing such a fate. Political resistance strategies such as the BNA employed throughout the conflict continue to be an effective means of stalling development and asserting community interests into the political decision-making domain, especially as communities have gained more agency in planning and zoning decisions regarding new development. In areas like East Austin, however, where rapid metropolitan growth is driving redevelopment of low-income areas, stemming the tides of development may not provide any substantive protection from displacement or losing affordability. Whether through a CDC, a community land trust (which Blackland has begun to tinker with), or other mechanisms for community development, the community needs to create a means of controlling development through the neighborhood to create sustained communal self-determination.

While a community development organization may enter the picture after there has already been a significant effort to organize and activate the community collectively, CDCs and the like may also serve to foster community cohesion and collectivization by broadening their scope beyond housing development to community service. Many CDCs (perhaps most) have been able to achieve various levels of success in development from the neighborhood to regional level, but the extent to which in doing so they actually preserve or protect the integrity of the communities they impact is limited. Where the BCDC has met success over time, beyond staying active in neighborhood development,

has been in providing a platform for community engagement through the Fannie Mae Stewart Conservatory that continues to facilitate community relationship building and support services.

The CDC specifically may not be an effective strategy to deploy in the east side given the rapid rise in property values that may be too great a barrier for a community seeking to acquire property. For communities situated in the path of growth of other urban metro areas but not yet experiencing the development and property value increases, a CDC or an alternative community-driven development strategy may be more feasible. The challenge of putting in place the organizational capacity and the financial resources to support acquisition and housing development is significant, but it is not insurmountable. As it was in Blackland, so it is that communities of color today possess a wealth of community capacities and cultural wealth from which they may rally together and mount a viable community resistance movement. As the following discussion considers, processes of mutual learning between communities of color form a continuum of community resistance knowledge building that is key to how communities successfully engage in resistance over time.

MUTUAL LEARNING ON RESISTANCE IN COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

While the role of external allies in bringing either additional political advocacy or some form of human capital that enables the community to pursue a new strategy was significant in Blackland, even John Henneberger will tell you (as he did me) that "the skills are held in the community at some level to do that sort of work." At the core of this notion from a critical race perspective is the fundamental value invested in the capital possessed within and by communities of color, whether that be in community cultural wealth terms or otherwise. There is a certain basic necessity of having leaders that are in

that position because they have the real, substantive connections with their neighbors and community more broadly to navigate the complex human dynamics at play when a community is at risk.

In terms of community cultural wealth there was great value invested by the community in the navigational capital of leaders like Poole or Smith, and they in turn possessed the social capital (or in a more basic sense, the genuine connections) needed to activate and empower the community. In his thesis McCarver notes the reliance he (and other externally-sourced actors) placed on the knowledge of neighborhood dynamics possessed by Poole and Smith to resolve internal neighborhood conflicts and provide authenticity to their decision-making processes. Vesting decision making in local leaders and the community itself ensured that residents could place their trust in organizational leadership. Knowing that the folk making decisions are those one already looks to for guidance in navigating the white world, or for support in hard times, gave residents the confidence necessary to truly buy-in to community resistance.

The resistant and navigational capital are critical for guiding a community resistance effort within a broader racialized context. McCarver recalls discussions on forms of protest the BNA could engage to counter UT's annexations and remarked that there were many forms of white protest, particularly those that use bodies as barriers to development processes (e.g. chaining residents to a house), that Poole and other local leaders rejected outright. This was not because they were not valid forms of protest, but local leaders with decades of experience interacting with the white world were all too aware of how little value black bodies were given by white authorities. Their navigational and resistant capital allowed local leaders to understand how communities of color had to craft more nuanced forms of resistance that did not expose the community to further racial subjugation.

Blackland also drew from the learning and experience of other communities of color on the east side, particularly the Guadalupe neighborhood, and shaped the BCDCs community development strategy in the image of their precursors. This relationship of mutual learning between Blackland and other east side communities speaks to the value of the knowledge and experiences of communities of color in developing community resistance capacity. This notion further underpins the value of studying cases like Blackland - these communities do not operate in a vacuum, and the experiences of past community resistance efforts can inform future efforts as they did in Blackland. While Henneberger made the connection between Blackland and Guadalupe, it was ultimately the methods of the Guadalupe Neighborhood Development Corporation that informed Blackland's BCDC strategies. Henneberger shared his reflections on this notion when asked about how to situate Blackland within the broader context of east side resistance:

> So that's to me, if you wanted to situate them politically in a place, I think they are the front end of neighborhoods asserting themselves and demonstrating, importantly - you know, you look at the relationship between BL, Guad, and Clark, they learned from each other. They innovated and they saw victories being won by other neighborhoods and they sought to replicate them and then they reshape the strategies a bit. To take confidence in the fact that they could have power, but then to look at the techniques that they were using. And these were interesting techniques because they relied on community development, they did not rely simply on community protest (Interview, 2018)

This iterative, community-driven process of developing such techniques embeds notions of critical race and community cultural wealth into the DNA of east side community resistance. The efficacy of these community development strategies to empowering communities of color is validated by this process of mutual learning through vesting core design of resistance in the broader east side community. In doing, so shared experiences and voices of marginalized communities of color become the catalyst for community change, rather than external actors. There is a role for external actors to play

in support of communities, as will be discussed in the final section of this chapter, but it is vital that their role be one of empowerment, shifting what is normative from the purely technical to the community designed.

THINK GLOBALLY

The relationship between state institutions and marginalized or historically segregated communities, whether in a US context or globally, is seldom clearly defined and rarely static (Miraftab, 2009). It is the dynamic relationship between communities and institutions and the spaces of participation, either claimed or invited, that shape community resistance and provide opportunities to destabilize the state's hegemony. From a radical planning perspective, the creation of a community-driven mode of development that could be used to effectively contest the authority of institutional development programs has significant implication for how communities may adapt to changing dynamics of power and resistance and assert their role in processes of development. The BNA excelled in creating spaces of participation through the public advocacy, media engagement, and at times protest. These created spaces allowed for a vital challenge to the University's development hegemony, yet without the BCDC the community may not have been able to prevent displacement long term.

The most successful community resistance movements, recalling the work of Oliver-Smith (2001), are those that can adapt and take advantage of changing resistance dynamics. It would take these 2 organizations the better part of a decade to effectively stop the University and assert control of their community's development. The continual adaptation to changing dynamics of resistance allowed the Blackland community to "expose and upset the normalized relations of dominance" (Miraftab, 2009, p.34), and through the BCDC the community continues to resist shifting forms of development

pressure. Resistance in Blackland was (and continues to be) part of a broader process of mutual learning between east-side communities over time, forming a shared body of experience with community resistance. For communities today, whether in the US or in the global south, the CDC may not be a viable organization to support sustained resistance. The Blackland community's contribution to global processes of mutual learning is not in the CDC, however, but in the dynamism and tenacity displayed by the community and their leaders to adapt and overcome the University's institutional hegemony.

THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL ACTORS (AND PLANNERS)

For Henneberger and Paup, whose role was invaluable in connecting Blackland with the GNCDC, being an ally to Blackland had less to do with what Blackland *did not* have (in terms of capacities) than with how they could support the community. As Henneberger explained in his interview:

> I think it was - here's some good people and a good fight, and the fight seemed similar to that that Guadalupe was doing. The real question was, what can we do to help these good people who are trying to support the [community]? It wasn't like people were banging on our doors to have us help them. It was, we're oriented to want to help in that situation, so we just did. (Interview, 2018)

In other words, their help was on the community's terms, and the decision to create the BCDC rested in community hands. Their expertise in CDCs was respected by the community, and in turn Henneberger and Paup showed deep respect for the community and its leaders. Decision making was always a community exercise, and while Henneberger may have disagreed at times with the decisions of the BNA his support never wavered.

Even after explicitly opposing the return to political resistance when it became clear UT was not going to meet the terms of the 1982 50/50 agreement, Henneberger

worked diligently to play his part in the renewed offensives by providing his technical expertise in council meetings and other spaces of resistance. It was also vital from the perspective of Henneberger and Paup to ensure capacity to manage the strategies they brought to the table was held by community members, as mentioned previously. They never assumed authority, and notably the tangible success of the GNDC was the support they offered to validate their CDC idea (rather than *their* technical knowledge). In this sense even the expertise they brought was grounded and informed largely by the work of other east side communities, further embodying critical race principles of drawing from knowledge and experience *within* communities of color.

The remarkable work of Bo McCarver merits one last exploration as well in the context of external actors lending support to communities of color. McCarver *was* a resident, but as a newer white community member he had to approach participation in resistance with deference to the existing community:

> John Henneberger: You know there was some tension around the role of white residents in the area, because the white residents had money and they had moved in later, and there was a question about them taking up space and stuff like that. Bo sort of, Bo was indispensable to them so there was never any, I don't recall - there was some strained relations over certain things here and there, but Bo was such an essential force in thinking through strategy, and other things like that. Katherine held him in check, you know, in terms of making sure, and Bo was very respectful of Katherine (Interview, 2018).

McCarver's media engagement strategies were vital for maintaining the challenge to the University and City's hidden and visible power, expanding individual resistant and navigational capital, and activating the neighborhood towards collective action. He earned that position of leadership not through asserting his expertise, at least not immediately, but rather through listening, volunteering for early neighborhood-led advocacy efforts, and building trust with leaders like Poole and Smith.

These are the lessons to be learned for planners and other disciplines that seek to form more substantive, supportive relationships with communities of color in the critical role of McCarver. We may have skills, expertise, human capital, or whatever else to offer, but the only way to do so and be true to values of equity and empowerment is to be earnest, listen closely, build trust, and talk 'real.' Empowerment comes from *within* the community. It is the responsibility of those who truly wish to support communities of color to work *for* the community, not the other way around. When asked by McCarver about her thoughts on how he came to be involved with the neighborhood, Poole offers a heartfelt description of how such trust and mutual respect is built. Thus, I too turn to Katherine Poole, one of the most steadfast defenders of community rights the east side has ever known, for the last word(s):

> Poole:... When I saw you [McCarver], you were talking with my Mom [Mama B]. You would hold long conversations with her. I was appreciative of that because I wanted her to talk with people. But when I came home from school, I was so tired I never talked with you. I knew you were White and I was suspicious. Oh yeah! It's best to be truthful. And I would test you. And I waited a long time to see your armour crack or tarnish. It never did. I was suspicious for two reasons: one you were White - living in a Black neighborhood. I wasn't impressed that you were living in a Black neighborhood because White people have different reasons for living in a Black neighborhood - ifs not necessarily to learn the culture. Its' cheaper to live in East Austin in a Black neighborhood. The other reason is some White people can't be Mr. so-and-so in a White neighborhood so he comes to a Black neighborhood and he is Mr. Bo McCarver. So I watch those things. I would talk with you so I could see. You sounded honest. You sounded very liberal - a good-hearted person. I would tell you things. And l would tell you things for the benefit of background so you would understand us - so you could deal with the problems that we were having. You knew those problems. You never once said anything negative. And I watch those things. Believe me I watched you closely. And I would set traps - and you never fell into one of my little traps. I would say at night "I'm going to crush that armour tomorrow," but I was never able to do it. After trying to crack your armour and being unsuccessful, then I said that is a true blue guy. Then I became very close to you because there came time when I would tell you things that happened to me personally - things that I didn't tell anybody. But knowing you - you didn't talk, you didn't gossip, You could always see the

good side of it. In many ways you helped me solve some of my personal problems. I had confidence in you. I still do (McCarver, 1995, p.200).

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